WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST ?

IS HE DIVINE OR NOT?

BY THE

REV. JAMES VAUGHAN.

CHURCH MISSIONARY, CALCUTTA.

Jesus saith,—"I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last." Rev. XXII. 13.

SECOND EDITION.

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CALCUTTA:

PUBLISHED AT NO. 10, HARE STREET.

1874.

THE

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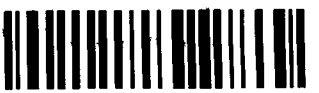
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PREFACE.

Any one hearing that this treatise is addressed to the Natives of India would naturally ask, "What class of Natives?" It is hardly necessary to reply that *educated* Natives are meant—the fact of this work being presented in the English language implies this. But it is manifest that not *all* educated Natives, but only a portion of that body can be desiderated. To adduce the proper proofs of Christ's divinity to those who do not recognise the grounds on which the proofs rest, and have no inclination to enquire into those grounds, would be a waste of time. But there is a class of educated Natives who, in certain respects and to a certain extent, occupy a similar platform to *that* of the Christian advocate; at any rate there is sufficient common ground between them and him to constitute a feasible area of amicable disputation.

Without danger of exaggeration we may say that, there are scattered over India *thousands* of educated Natives who have no faith in the national creed; by a variety of influences they have come to regard Hindooism as utterly destitute of divine authority. Not a few alas! have made a short cut from idolatry to infidelity; they glory in believing nothing, in fearing neither God nor man, and they live as they list. Others, more sober and thoughtful, cast about for a faith on which their souls may rely; they cannot live like the beasts that perish. Of these a goodly number ally themselves to the Brahmist Associations scattered

throughout the country; the rest join no organised body, nor have they any clearly defined creed; they have turned their backs on idolatry, and are groping their way to something truer and better than the system they have left, or the eclectic system which Brahmoism presents.

The attitude of this latter class and of Brahmos with respect to Christianity is pretty much the same. They agree in regarding the character of Jesus Christ with veneration; His teaching is pronounced as worthy of all praise, the ethics of Christianity are declared to be superior to that of any other system, the ameliorating influence of Christ's religion in the world is readily admitted; the Bible is praised as a holy Book, and its sacred utterances are read and quoted with respect; nay, it is no unusual thing to hear such persons call themselves followers of Christ. The *progressive* Brahmos, as everybody knows, claim to possess and maintain that type of Christianity which is most consonant with the mind and will and teaching of Jesus Christ. *

* The *Bengalee*, a Native paper conducted in English, endeavours, in a recent issue, to repel the charge that educated Natives are hostile to the progress of Christianity. It argues—"There are many amongst them who read the Bible with greater reverence, and abide by the teachings of Christ with greater constancy than many of those who profess the Christian faith. If reverence for the character of Christ, and profound admiration for the sublime morality of the Gospel, constitute hostility to the progress of Christianity, then are the educated Natives of Bengal truly hostile to the spread of the Christian religion." It is pleasing to meet with such a declaration in a non-Christian paper; but the latter clause should be received with considerable limitation. As

This being the case it is evident there is ground on which to go in an appeal to such readers in respect of the divinity of Jesus Christ. If, for instance, we find them quoting the Bible and citing facts from Church History to *disprove* the doctrine of Christ's divinity, we are certainly justified in adducing evidence from the same sources *in support* of the doctrine. They, by citing those authorities have, *ipso facto*, admitted a common Court of Appeal. Into that Court we carry our suit and abide by its decision.

As regards the question of inspiration, no doubt, a very material difference exists between the Appellants respectively. It is true, you may repeatedly hear non-Christians of the classes just described speak in a certain vague way of inspired men and inspired books; whatever they mean by the term they would not deny to *the Bible its share in this undefined, mysterious* quality. It may fairly be doubted whether those who thus apply the term "inspiration" could explain the meaning they attach to it. At any rate, it is clear that a very broad distinction exists between *their* view of the matter and that of the *Christian* who looks upon the Bible as *Theopneustos*, a God-breathed, a divinely inspired volume.

But, agreement on this point, however desirable, is not absolutely essential to the purposes of discussion. We are willing to meet our friends on their own basis;

a body the educated Natives of Bengal have no such interest in Christianity as would evoke either their love or hatred towards it in any marked degree. They are simply *indifferent* to it; it is only of a *small minority* that the above remarks can be truly predicated.

we consent, for the time being, to look upon the Bible simply as a credible record of facts, and as giving in particular a reliable history of the sayings and doings of Jesus Christ, and we repeat what we have already implied, that the fact of so large a portion of the Bible, especially of the new Testament being accepted, quoted, applied by our friends without a single doubt as to its truthfulness, justifies us in regarding this as their basis. The only thing that we ask is, that the appeal shall be conducted in all fairness, honesty and candour. Everybody knows that in a Court of Law "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing else but the truth," should be spoken; everybody knows that, to suppress evidence, or reject it without good reason, is criminal and unjust; and, finally, everybody is aware of the axiom that every man must be regarded as innocent until he is proved to be guilty. All *that we ask* is, that these principles shall guide us in the solemn enquiry in which we are about to engage.

Now what will be the result of our going on these principles? Manifestly, one result will be this—instead of confining our attention to a few isolated passages, we shall take the Bible *as a whole;* we shall enquire into the *general tenor* of its evidence; we shall accord to the Bible at least as much fairness of interpretation as we would to any standard work of a secular character; *we shall accept its testimony as true unless there be substantial evidence to the contrary;* we shall not feel at liberty to say "I accept this as true because it agrees with my views; I reject that as false because it differs from them," for such an assertion of judicial authority

could only go on the supposition of our personal infallibility, and nobody but the Pope claims that attribute.

In truth we are indicating a grievance,—a serious grievance, of which the Bible and Christians may well complain. We will illustrate what we mean ;—a non-Christian says, "I honor Jesus Christ as one of the most holy, wise and good of the children of men." "Then," replies the Christian, "if He be a being of such a character He must be at the same time *truthful;* let us see then what He says of Himself." The Christian then proceeds to quote some of the wondrous utterances of Jesus in which He asserts His Superhuman character and claims divine homage as His right. Immediately the non-Christian starts back; he doubts the genuineness of those passages; you ask him, *Why!* You shew him that he has actually quoted as true *passage after* passage standing in juxta-position with those which you have cited or forming part of the same address attributed to Christ; you ask him on what principle of consistency he chooses these and refuses those; you prove to him beyond contradiction that the passages accepted and those rejected stand on precisely the same footing, that the same historic and documentary evidence as proves the truth of these establishes also the truth of those, that, therefore, he is in all consistency bound to regard the two classes of texts as equally credible. But alas! too often your reasoning is vain, he believes these texts for he thinks they *seem likely to be true,* he rejects those, for, according to his judgment, they *ought not* to be true, and therefore *cannot* be true.

A striking instance of this strangely inconsistent and illogical mode of treating the Bible is presented in a lecture ("Inspiration" *p.* 9) recently delivered by the Brahmo Leader, Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen. In this address he quotes the following utterances of Jesus Christ, "I can of mine own self do nothing," " The words which ye hear are not mine," "I live by the Father,"—He cites these passages evidently without the slightest doubt as to their genuineness ; he believes them to have been actually spoken by the Prophet of Nazareth, and proceeds accordingly to draw an inference from them, "They furnish," says he, "the most conclusive evidence of the impossibility of charging that great prophet with a proud attempt to arrogate Divinity."

Now the very first query which rises to the mind is this—on what evidence has the Lecturer *assured himself* that the passages quoted are *really* the words of Christ ? What other evidence can he assign than the fact of his finding them in the Bible ? But you naturally ask again, are there no other utterances of Jesus in that Book calling for attention ? Do those *three* sayings comprise the grand total of what Christ testified of Himself ? Is it not recorded in the very same book that Jesus said, "I and the Father are one" John. X. 30. "All things that the Father hath are mine." John XVI. 15. "All men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father." John V. 23. "I am from above." John VIII. 23. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." John XIV. 2. "I am in the Father and the Father in me." John XIV. 11. "As the Father

raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them even so the Son quickeneth whom He will." John V. 21. "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me." John XIV. 6. "I will send unto you the Comforter (the Holy Ghost) He shall not speak of Himself . . . He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine and shall shew it unto you." John XVI. 7, 13, 14. "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish." John X. 28.

Now the above passages—and we could greatly multiply their number—occur, not only in the New Testament, but in the *very Gospel* from which the Lecturer's three texts are taken. Is it not most natural to enquire on what principle he selected the three texts which he has adduced? He cannot have been ignorant of the existence of the other passages; he must then have *ignored or rejected them; this* is evident from the conclusion which he draws; for, had he taken these passages into account, it is hardly possible that he could have denied that Jesus actually claimed to be Divine. On what ground then did he pass over those passages as though they had no existence? We may confidently challenge him to shew that a particle more of credibility attaches to the passages chosen than belongs to those he has rejected. Why then does he believe those and reject these? The sole reason seems to be that, his conclusion was a *foregone conclusion*, not one resting in any honest sense on the utterances of Jesus; he had settled the point in his own mind beforehand that Jesus was *merely human;* He was "a great prophet" and nothing more; but,

it would be "proud" and "arrogant" in any mortal to claim to be divine, *ergo*, Jesus did *not* claim to be divine; *ergo*, those passages in which He is said to put forth such a claim must be spurious. *

Such is Brahmo *logic* in its bearing on the Bible. In truth, we are too sad to be sarcastic on such a

* A recent writer in the *Calcutta Christian Intelligencer* seems to think that the Lecturer, instead of questioning the genuineness of the passages we have adduced, would fall back upon the Humanitarian mode of interpreting them, and thus, whilst acknowledging their integrity, would explain away their natural sense. We are of opinion that the Brahmo Leader, if pressed with the passages in question, would prefer the shorter and easier method of repudiation to that of interpretation. The remarks of the above writer, however, are so telling and withal so *true* in their bearing on that vicious mode of interpretation, that they are well worth preserving; he writes—"The question may be, not of the trustworthiness of the record, but of its *interpretation*, and this seems to be the ground that Baboo K. C. Sen takes, judging from the passage quoted above. After striking out the word *proud* from this passage, since it is an assumption of the very point in dispute and therefore unwarranted, we can assure our Brahmo friend that the Humanitarian interpretation of these records cannot be established by any fair and scholarly criticism of the whole record. Putting aside the fact of the uniformity of the interpretation accepted by all branches of the Christian Church, who have scarcely one other thing in common, that the Divinity of Christ *is taught* in the New Testament, it is conclusively established by the researches of the scholars in Germany, *who are infidels.* They looked upon the *whole* record as false, no matter for what reasons, but would have laughed to scorn the shallowness of any scholar attempting to prove that the doctrine of Christ's Divinity was *not* taught, nor *intended* to be taught in the Gospel. The Unitarian theories of Belsham and his coadjutors are simply demolished, and utterly expelled from the domain of scholarly criticism."

momentous subject, but it is easy to see that, if any man were to treat an ordinary book—say a work on history, philosophy, or science, in such a way, the literary world would, with one consent, pour out upon him its vials of ridicule and scorn.

We can understand some one remarking, "If all this be true, if it be so that non-Christians play fast and loose with the Bible in a style like this, then what is the good of this treatise? The leading proofs of the doctrine you seek to establish will have to be taken from the Bible—but who will acknowledge their cogency and bow to their authority?" We believe, as a matter of fact, that not a few thoughtful non-Christians are more or less impressed with the inconsistency of treating the Bible in the way indicated; they are beginning to feel that they ought, logically, to believe very much more or very much less of that sacred Record; they see that, if it be true for all that they admit, it is true for very much beyond that. With sorrow we say it, some are falling back on the *sceptical* alternative; they had rather reject the authority of the Bible entirely, than acknowledge Jesus to be divine. It cannot be doubted that the Bible has sunk in the estimation of numbers who once revered and honored it, the sole and simple reason being, as we are convinced, that the Bible, if acknowledged true, proves *more than they wish to believe.*

But there are others, and these not a few either, who have a latent affection for that Holy Book; these read it in private and meditate on its teaching; from time to time they seek from Christian friends the

solution of their difficulties; they will avow their devotion to Christ as the holiest and best of men and the brightest Exemplar of our race, and, with evident sincerity, they will say, "Prove to us that He is divine and we will fall down before Him."

To such persons emphatically we address ourselves. We are not without hope that others beyond their circle may, by the goodness of God, learn something for their good from this little book, but our chief aim is to help those who are honestly desiring light and guidance. Our effort is, to cause the various rays of light bearing upon our subject to merge into one focus, and so carry conviction to the minds of those who are really *feeling after* the truth.

In drawing up this treatise we have endeavoured to present, in a condensed and concise form, the substance of several works of a standard character. Those works, though invaluable in themselves, are, for the most part, too elaborate and too bulky for readers of the class we contemplate, besides which, being drawn up from a somewhat different *stand-point* to that which we occupy in this country, they occasionally present the discussion under aspects which strike the Indian Reader as irrelevant to his case, and at the same time omit certain matters which to him are important. As regards the *form* into which we have thrown the discussion and the various topics on which we have touched, we have been guided mainly by what we have learnt of the *necessities of the case* through private intercourse with educated Natives.

Should any of our readers, after going through

this treatise, be desirous of pursuing their enquiries urther, we would point them to three admirable works —works which are typical of many others of similar excellence. Should the reader wish to know more of the *historical* aspect of the question, we would refer him to "Bishop Bull's Defence of the Nicene Creed." Should he desire to go further into the *Scriptural* evidence for this doctrine and that of the blessed Trinity, let him study Bickersteth's "Rock of Ages." Should he long for some work in which the various aspects of the case are discussed in a masterly and exhaustive style, we cannot do better than direct him to Dr. Liddon's Bampton Lectures for the year 1866.

In the mean time we commit this simple production to the grace and blessing of Him Whose cause we plead; may He, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, use it for His own glory and for the good of immortal souls.

Calcutta,
August 10th 1873.

J. V.

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WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST ?

Is He Divine or not ?

CHAPTER I.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ENQUIRY.

IT is impossible to overrate the tremendous importance of the enquiry on which we are entering. Eternal life or death depends upon the conclusion at which we arrive. O most merciful God, do Thou guide, assist, sanctify and teach us; help us to find the truth and with honest and sincere hearts to embrace it!

What think ye of Christ? is a question proposed by Christ himself. It was first addressed to a party of Jews, but it is equally proposed, dear Reader, to you and me. Such a question should go home to every heart and call forth the solemn responsive query,—"what do I think of Christ?"

Christ is by common consent an Object worthy of thought.

That Christ is a worthy Object of thought and reflection, it is not necessary to prove. The world may be said to be agreed on this point. For eighteen centuries the world has been thinking and talking and writing of Christ; wherever the history of Christ has been proclaimed, men have been compelled to feel, often despite their

wishes and tastes, that there was somewhat about that history claiming attention and serious thought. But thought implies research, and honest research implies the surrender of prejudice and bias. May we come then to this momentous enquiry with minds free and unfettered; let pre-conceived notions for the time being stand aside. May the child-like cry of our souls be, "Speak Lord; for thy servant heareth."

"What *think* ye of Christ?" This query indicates the importance of our *thoughts* and *opinions*. Many persons make light of these; they say, "O it is only a matter of opinion, and opinions differ; and besides we are not responsible for our opinions, we believe what we *must* believe." Now it would be easy to prove that the question, *what we believe*, as truly involves moral responsibility as the question what we *do* and *say*. A man's heart and will as really influence his opinions as they do his words and actions; but be that as it may, the one point which we insist upon is this,—if it were true that we are in no degree responsible for our opinions, it would still be highly probable that evil consequences would result from our mistakes. Analogy teaches this lesson. A man who, by mistake, embarks in a ruinous speculation, or drinks deadly poison thinking it to be wholesome medicine, does not escape the consequences because he conscientiously believed he was right. The laws of nature sternly avenge themselves on the erring without regard to the degree of culpability involved in their errors. Surely this fact ought to make men tremblingly anxious to hold

We are responsible for our opinions, but whether so or not, the penalty of mistakes is pretty sure to follow.

right opinions, for that which takes place in the natural and physical government of the world may be regarded as typical of effects following under its moral government. The Divine Governor indeed is one and the same, and it must be reasonable to argue from what we *see* of His acting to what we do *not* see.

In the special case before us, it must be self-evident that an error of opinion is a matter of the utmost gravity. On whatever hand the error may lie, the issues are terrible to contemplate. If, for instance, Christ be, what multitudes declare him to be, a mere man, how awful is the sin of those who adore him as Divine! Every time they thus worship the creature as the creator they are guilty of the foulest idolatry. The fact of their doing this in error does not alter the nature of their act—it is idolatry still, otherwise there is no such thing as idolatry in the world, for all sincere idolators believe the object of their worship to be divine. If, on the other hand, notwithstanding what multitudes say to the contrary, Jesus Christ be actually and truly Divine, "very God of very God," then how daring the profanity, how perilous the wickedness of those who degrade Him to the level of a mere creature and refuse to do homage to "Him in whom they live and move and have their being!" And certainly there is no reason either from the analogy of nature or the voice of Revelation to infer that, the fact of their thinking and acting thus *conscientiously* will prevent dire consequences following, but quite the reverse; for, if in a natural way minor errors are punished and often very severely,

The terrible nature of a mistake on either hand.

"of how much sorer punishment think ye shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God" and done despite to His holy name!

There is just one other thought, which, although we do not urge it by any means as proving anything, is still a consideration which no serious and honest enquirer would overlook. It is this,—if it should be true that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, and that, as such, He became incarnate in human form, what prodigious importance must attach to that fact and what stupendous and momentous results must necessarily depend upon it and flow out of it! If it be true that the incarnate God laid down His life as a ransom for man's redemption then how priceless must be the blessings which such a ransom procured! how appalling the guilt and wretchedness which made such a ransom needful! It must be clearly impossible for our finite capacity to measure either the good procured or the evil averted by a sacrifice so awful and astounding. All the events of time, all the discoveries of Science, the rise and fall of dynasties, what are all these in the light of that one overwhelming fact, if it be a fact? Yea, what is the creation of a world or ten thousand worlds to a truth like this, if it be a truth?

What the doctrine if true, necessarily involves.

"'Twas great to speak the world from naught,
'Twas greater to redeem."

These thoughts may well dispose our minds to approach the consideration of the proper proofs of our subject with gravity, seriousness and prayerful attention.

CHAPTER II.

What the World has thought of Christ.

By the world we mean those who are outside the Church of Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles. Jesus Christ has ever been to such persons a most puzzling enigma. The number and variety of the theories which have been put forth by those outsiders sufficiently prove how difficult the problem has been to solve. The time would fail us to tell of the mental throes and philosophical struggles of the *thinking* world to answer this one simple question—Who was Jesus Christ?

Why so many different opinions and theories respecting Jesus Christ?

Of course the reason of so many differing phases of opinion on this subject has been the difficulty of harmoniously blending in one definite and probable theory all the known features of the case. It has been somewhat like the efforts of an unskilled person to connect the disjointed portions of a complicated Chinese puzzle; up to a certain point everything seems to go on well, piece fits into piece and the rejoiced operator is fain to exclaim in triumph, "Now I have got it!" but anon he discovers there are two or three pieces with which he can do nothing, the design he has erected looks very nice and symmetrical and he is mightily pleased with it; but since there are certain pieces which cannot find a place therein, he is reluctantly compelled to abandon that design for another. This next ideal is probably very diverse from the other; as before, the

construction goes on successfully up to a certain stage, and then he comes again to a dead stand; a few refractory pieces give the lie to this second conception; so he goes on multiplying mistakes and adding to his disappointment until probably he throws up the luckless effort in disgust. In truth, there is one and only one design which will embrace in perfect harmony every portion of the puzzle, and until he can hit upon that, perplexity and disappointment must be his portion.

It has been thus with the various theories respecting the person and character of Jesus Christ; each conception has embraced a number of the features recorded in the history of that remarkable person; the inventor and a body of ardent adherents were charmed for a while with the novel and ingenious scheme; they were sure they had found out who Christ was; but, further enquiry and perhaps, adverse criticism, brought to light certain discrepancies, there were peculiar features which were not represented, important particulars which were not accounted for. Somehow or other these had to be brought into the picture, the theory was modified or a new one developed. Such has been the case again and again in the history of the world's endeavours to account for Jesus Christ. To all except those who by Divine grace have embraced the one and only solution of the great problem, Christ has ever been a perplexing riddle and a stone of stumbling.

Why one has displaced another?

It was thus amongst the Jews; the vast majority were resolved to reject His Messianic and Divine claims, for his lowly position, humble bearing and spiritual

teaching were utterly at variance with their preconceived, carnal notions of the Messianic reign; but, though agreed to reject Him, they could not agree as to who and what He was? Some said "he is a good man, others, nay, but he deceiveth the people." In answer to an enquiry put by Christ to his disciples as to the opinion which the world had of him, they replied, "Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others Jeremias or one of the prophets." Matt. xvi. 14.

What the Jews thought of Christ.

When the religion of Jesus began to be preached among Gentile nations, the battle still raged around the puzzling query, who and what is Christ? Certain persons who by baptism found admission into the Church, by and by became restless and discontented; the simple doctrine of the holy Catholic Church respecting her adorable Head, Christ Jesus, struck them as unphilosophical or unscientific or irrational and, upon the whole, in their estimation, *improbable*. They set themselves to amend the Church's creed as to the person and character of Jesus Christ. They sought out to themselves many inventions; others again improved upon their discoveries, and thus the story went on; sect after sect arose, each different from the rest and each believing its own view of Christ to be right and adhering to that, until some more novel theory displaced it. In this way centuries elapsed in profitless discussion—profitless as regards the impugners of the Catholic verity, for they only sunk deeper and deeper in the mire of doubt and inconsistency; but the effect of those disputations to the Church

What the Gentiles thought of Christ.

of Christ was to settle, ground and establish her in the truth which she held from the beginning.

Amongst the early opposers of Catholic doctrine were some who contended for the pure and simple *humanity* of Jesus Christ. They held that he was human and nothing more; human in the same sense in which all men are so. They declared they felt no difficulty in regarding Jesus Christ as a mere man. Probably their theory was not much different from that now held by the general body of Theists; but there was one important point of difference which ought to be noticed. It is well known that Theists in the present day utterly repudiate all that is miraculous in the history of Christ. It is not very clear on what grounds they do this, seeing most of them accord authority to the records of Christ's life, and repeatedly quote from them as if they thought them true; and every body knows that the *miraculous* is interwoven with the history of Christ at every turn,—yet so it is, our theistical friends tell us that we must eliminate all that is supernatural from the story of Jesus as absurd and impossible. It is a curious fact, however, that those *ancient* Theists demanded no such repudiation. They did not question the reality of Christ's miracles, any more than did the Jews who witnessed them.* We may be quite sure that if the denial of these had been as

The humanitarian theory.

Those theorists admitted the miracles of Christ.

* That the Jews *did* believe in the reality of Christ's miracles cannot for a moment be doubted. On one memorable occasion we read,—"Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council

feasible in those early ages, as some think it in this nineteenth century, those keen and able opponents of Christianity would not have hesitated to adopt that conclusion. As a matter of fact, they tacitly accepted the testimony of the Christian Records as to the truth of the miracles. They generally met, however, the Christian argument for Christ's Divinity on the ground of his miraculous power by saying, "O no, nothing of the kind, miracles may be wrought by the arts of magic; Christ wrought miracles by this occult power, it had therefore nothing to do with divinity." Now,

and said, what do we ? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him." John XI. 47,48.

The Talmudical literature of the Jews in a very singular way illustrates this point. These writings date from the second century of the Christian era. Mr. Baden Powell in "Essays and Reviews" says,—"The later Jews adopted the strange legend of the *Sepher Toldeth Jehsu* (Book of the Generation of Jesus) which describes His miracles substantially as they are described in the Gospels, but says, that He obtained His power by hiding himself in the temple, and possessing himself of the secret ineffable name, by virtue of which such wonders could be wrought." Mr. Powell also quotes a statement of Arobis, a Jewish writer, who says,—"The Jews disbelieved not because they denied that the works which are related in the Gospels were done by Jesus, but because they did not suffer themselves to be persuaded by them that He was the Messiah."

Thus although the Jews rejected Christ; although they succeeded in nailing Him to the cross, they found it impossible to resist or suppress the conviction that He had been in some way or other endued with supernatural power. The fact that His works not only wrung from the prejudiced beholders such a confession, but compelled their equally prejudiced descendants to acquiesce in their admission is, most thoughtful persons will admit, one of the most conclusive evidences of the reality of the miracles which Jesus wrought.

we suspect, if only our modern theists could bring themselves to admit the truth of Christ's miracles, they would find it impossible to dispute his divine power; for it will now be admitted on all hands that if the laws of nature can be interfered with, such interference must be a *divine* act.

Very early in the history of Christianity certain Gnostic sects set themselves to find out Christ's nature and origin. The *Valentinians* propounded a fanciful theory of certain spiritual beings, who had from time to time proceeded from the Deity; they termed them *Æons*, and they said that Jesus Christ was the most dis-

Gnostic teaching.

tinguished of those mysterious beings. Thus, they said, he came out from God, but was not Divine himself. The *Docetæ* could not understand how a human body could be united to one of those illustrious offsprings of Deity; they therefore denied the literality of Christ's body; they declared that he really had no body but only *seemed* to have one; that he consequently did not suffer and die in reality but only *in appearance*. These strange theories being weighed in the balances were found wanting and before long utterly vanished.

Another notion of Christ, and that which obtained great prominence in primitive times, is called the *Arian* theory. The man who first propounded this view was named Arius; he was a presbyter of the Church of Alexandria. The Arians held that Christ was very much more than man, that he was only man in respect to his human flesh, but that he had existed long before his appearance in the world; they said he was the Son

of God because he was the noblest being in the created universe, that he was higher than the highest Archangel, that he actually created the world, not by his own power, but that God employed him as His Agent in that great and glorious undertaking; they even ascribed to Christ a degree of independent creative power, they said the Holy Ghost was the creation of Christ the Son of God. The Arian philosophy lived a long time and, no doubt, its sanguine followers believed it to give a true account of that wonderful person Christ Jesus; but, at length, the notion succumbed to the force of earnest criticism, it was found that the Arian, as well as the Humanitarian theory failed to give a full and consistent account of Christ, there were still certain sections of the puzzle unaccounted for.

The Arian theory.

Even among those who held the true and actual divinity of Christ speculations arose, now about the character of Christ's *divinity*, now about his *humanity*. A sect in the third century called the Sabellians taught that Christ was truly Divine, but not a distinct being from God the Father; they held that there was only *one* Person in the Godhead, and that Christ was really the Father incarnate, that He was not, as He Himself affirmed, one with the Father, but the Father himself.

The Sabellian theo-

In the next century another body, the Apollinarians, taught that the union between the deity and humanity in Christ was of the most intimate character, that the relation between the Godhead and the manhood was analagous to that which

The Apollinarians.

exists between the soul and body in ordinary men. They seemed, in short, to teach that the Godhead supplied the place of the human soul in Christ. They thus impugned the perfection of Christ's humanity and, by completely merging the two natures, denied the integrity of each.

The Nestorians.

Somewhat later the Nestorians propounded the opposite doctrine of two distinct natures and two distinct persons in Christ. They said he was perfect God and perfect man, but they denied any essential union between his manhood and Godhead, except as regards will and affection.

All these and several other notions were put forward by men of speculative minds. Those theories lived their day and then passed away; some of them after sleeping for centuries have from time to time been revived by other speculators. It may with certainty be averred that on this subject "there is nothing new under the sun." Of the manifold theories which are common in our day as to the person and character of Jesus Christ, none can lay claim to originality; they are but the old story told over again; the *words*, it may be, are different, but the *ideas* are the same. And with the light of past history to guide us it requires not prophetic foresight to foretel what will become of them. Human speculations on this momentous subject have been and ever will be shifting as the sand; but revealed truth is as immoveable as the everlasting hills. "Heaven and earth," said the great Teacher of Whom we are speaking, "shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Nothing original in the theories of the present day.

CHAPTER III.

What the early Church thought of Christ.

We have seen what Jews and Gentiles thought of Christ; we have heard the speculations of heretical sects respecting Him. Hitherto all has been chaos and confusion, and we can well understand our readers enquiring—"Amidst so many conflicting opinions and clashing theories, what are we to believe?" A haze of intensified doubt may well seem to envelop the whole subject, and the solution to the grand query, who and what was Christ? may appear to the candid enquirer to be further off than ever. We trust he will find it otherwise.

A natural enquiry.

Not unfrequently, the traveller in mountainous districts beholds the mighty hill which he is climbing wrapped in a dense fog; the mist effectually obscures the sun and cuts off all trace of the path before him; but there is no help for it, advance he must; the nearer he advances to the line of vapour the more is his vision contracted; at length he enters the cloud itself, he struggles along, his breathing heavy, his steps weary, but ever tending upwards; at last, as if by magic, a new scene opens out before him, he emerges from the curtain of vapour into the pure ether; the sun in his glory at once shines upon him; the azure firmament sorrounds him; he

'Upwards' and 'onwards' must be his motto.

breathes freely and gazes with thankfulness on the white floating barrier which now lies at his feet.

In our pursuit of the great question before us we are taking an *upward* course; hitherto we have been in the region of mist and vapour, but there is light and truth beyond. The only thing needed is, honestly and earnestly to keep our eyes turned upward; sooner or later we are sure to emerge. Alas! too many, loath to quit the fog, choose it for their home. With them it is as if the traveller on reaching the vapoury barrier, at once reverted from an upward to a *horizontal* course; they thus for ever go on in the gloom of doubt and inhale the miasma of unbelief; to the free air and light of heaven above them they remain strangers to the end.

Some settle in abiding gloom.

It must, by no means, be inferred from what we have written in the last chapter that the Church of Christ was ever in doubt as to the person and character of Christ; it must not be supposed that the Church arrived at the orthodox view of its sacred Head after a period of harassing uncertainty and painful research. Nothing of the kind; there never was a time when the Catholic Church (by which we mean the *Universal* Church of Christ) did not hold and teach the very same doctrine that she holds and teaches now. We do not mean to say that the primitive Christians expressed themselves in the terminology of the creeds; we do not affirm that in the earliest ages the Church had any fixed formula of common consent with regard to the topic we are discussing. The creeds are to Christianity what a

The Church was never in doubt.

grammar is to language. People spoke English, Urdu and Bengali ages before grammars existed; those very useful productions did not give birth to language, they only brought to light the order which had all along existed in it. So the Creeds did nothing more than express in a formal and technical way the doctrine which the Church had held from the very beginning; they did not propound a single new thesis or article of faith. The need of Creeds was then first felt when teachers of new and strange doctrines first appeared in the Church; the enunciation of heretical notions aroused the diligence and zeal of the Church. The primitive Christians were quite sure that the dubious sentiments put forth were at variance with Catholic truth. They were satisfied the trumpet was giving an uncertain sound; the strange notes they listened to were not in accordance with the soft harmony of divine teaching with which they were familiar; the music which they knew so well had not before been reduced to writing; the Creeds were nothing more than the musical notes; the sweet strains of doctrinal truth had all along charmed the *ear* and heart of the Church, the Creeds presented those same strains, in black and white, to the *eye* of both the Church and the world. *

The relation of the Creeds to Catholic truth.

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* Nothing is more common in our day than to hear persons avow a sort of pious horror of Creeds and dogmas; but now with regard to those who think they must needs eliminate all dogmas from their religion, we will only say—*let them try*. A religion with no dogmas—no articles of faith! What is it? Where is it? Conceive of it if you can. Doubtless, the nearest approach to it is *atheism*; this is a

The point then which we have to establish is, the doctrine of the early Church respecting the Godhead of Christ. The question now before us is, not what the Church's Creed say on the subject; but what the Church itself said before a single creed was drawn up. Everybody can see the importance of this enquiry, for, the repudiators of the Catholic doctrine are perpetually insinuating, and sometimes even *asserting*, that the early Christians, the immediate descendants of the Apostles, knew nothing of this doctrine. "The whole matter," say they, "of the deification of Christ lies in a nutshell and admits of the simplest solution; the immediate followers of Christ never dreamt of paying him divine honours; but they were inspired with the most ardent love to his person and devotion to his doctrine; these impressions they transmitted to their converts; as the religion spread the devotion grew; by imperceptible exaggera-

The objectors' account of the matter.

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great *negation* truly, but even Atheism has its Creed. What are the negations of atheism but dogmas—things to be disbelieved? There is no God, no soul, no future life, no heaven, no hell. These are the atheist's dogmas, his creed, his confession of unbelief. And, so good Reader, if you are *not* an atheist, if his *negatives* are with you *affirmatives*, then you have got your positive dogmas, your fixed creed, your settled articles of faith. You cannot avoid this; you cannot stand a moment without dogmas and a creed; it is no matter whether your creed has been written or not, it is of no importance by what name you call it—*there it is* and you cannot help yourself. In so far as you maintain there are doctrines which must be believed, so far do you maintain a *dogmatic* religion; the controversy, therefore, between you and Christians is one of *number* not of *principle*; at the most you can only censure Christians for holding too many dogmas, whilst you thank God *you* hold *so few*.

tions, gradually a halo of superhuman splendour came to encircle the head of the prophet of Nazareth; until, at length, the Church was prepared for the idolatrous compact, and the creeds proclaimed to the world the doctrine that the founder of Christianity was divine."

Now it is undeniable that this kind of hero worship has given rise to most of the idolatrous systems which have figured in the world. The majority of the gods worshipped by ancient and modern heathens are nothing more than deified mortals,—men, who by their superior prowess or skill or benevolence laid the foundation of a reputation which, through the enthusiasm of their compatriots, the fantasies of poets, gradually culminated in divine honours. Before however this objection will hold good in reference to the Catholic doctrine before us, it must be shewn that the notion of the essential divinity of Jesus Christ was really a matter of growth and development. The objector must be prepared to lay his finger on some era in the early Church, when Jesus was *not* recognised as the Almighty Son of God, the divine Saviour of the world. A doctrine of this tremendous moment could not, like Jonah's gourd, spring up in a night; it would have been a sheer impossibility for the whole Christian Church in every part of the world, by common consent, in an hour to cease regarding Jesus as a mere man, and with one heart and voice to fall down and worship him as a God. Suppose, if you like, a sudden transition of this kind in the case of an individual or of a number of individuals; nay, suppose further, that a whole Church in some province or coun-

The objection in this case irrelevant.

try had made such an improbable leap; can it be doubted that notes of dissent and censure must have been heard from other Churches of Christendom unaffected by the monstrous error? That the whole of Christendom could at one swoop have been hurled into the vortex of idolatrous delusion is an idea which utterly sinks under the weight of its inherent improbability.

What we are prepared to establish.

The position then which we maintain, which we are prepared to prove, and which we challenge our oppugners to controvert is, that the essential Deity of Christ was held in all its integrity by the early Church from the days of the Apostles downwards, that there was no *hiatus*, no interval of *doubt*, much less *unbelief*, in that doctrine; that there were no stages of growth and development, that the doctrine really had but *one* stage, and that the stage of absolute maturity and perfection.

In the illustrations which we shall give of this position we will take an *upward* course. We will begin a period somewhat anterior to the Council of Nice, and journey upwards to the era of the Apostolic Fathers. The Council of Nice was assembled in the year 325 A. D. It consisted of delegates from all the leading churches of Christendom. Some years before, a priest named Arius had impugned the doctrine of the essential deity of Christ.*

The Council of Nice why convened.

* An obscure person, named Theodotus, a tanner, had preceded Arius in denying the Catholic doctrine. He was at once excommunicated and his teaching sank into oblivion. The greater prominence of the Arian theory may be accounted for partly by the superior ability of Arius himself and partly by the extreme subtlety

In the previous chapter we have given some account of the theory he put forth; from which it will be seen that he was far from regarding Jesus as a mere man, that, in fact, he considered him the very highest of all created intelligences, and as endued with a kind of creative power; but he denied his true and real Godhead; he thus shocked the convictions of Christendom, and the Council was convened with the view of denouncing the subtle and deadly error. The Nicene Creed which was then drawn up and has been used in the Church for more than fifteen centuries, is but the dogmatic utterance of the faith of the primitive Church on the solemn topic discussed.

Our object is to prove that the doctrine which was enunciated by that Council, was not a new doctrine, but the very doctrine held by the Church during the three centuries preceding the Council.

The first witnesses to this fact shall be *unbelievers*. Our readers are aware that Christianity had in the early ages to bear the burnt of very subtle and vigorous attacks by the philosophers of that day. A glance at the charges which they brought against Christianity may give us an insight into the faith which the early Christians held. If we find those learned unbelievers taxing Christians with worshipping Christ as God, and if, on the other hand, we find the Christian respondents, not only admitting, but glorying in the

The evidence of unbelievers as to the faith of the early Church.

which characterised his definitions of his theory; the heretical poison was often so artfully concealed in his disputations that even many of the orthodox were deceived thereby.

truth of the charges, the conclusion, we submit, can be none other than that which we have above defined.

Arnobius, a Christian writer, in the year 303, quotes in a general way the accusations of the heathen. He says, "They tell us the gods are angry with you, not because you worship the Almighty God, but because you contend that *he* was *God* who was born a man, and, which is infamous even for vile persons, was crucified; and because you believe that He is still living, and worship him with daily prayers."

The general charges of the heathen.

Porphyry and Julian the apostate were two of the bitterest assailants of Christianity; they were moreover men of keen understanding and subtle intellect. The grand feature in the Christian system which called forth their most decided opposition was the very point before us, the assumed deity of Christ. Against this they directed the fiercest artillery of hatred and scorn. Some of their heathen friends thought them victorious in argument; they represented the Christians as being vanquished before them. One of these, an Orator named Libanius, especially "praised Porphyry and Julian for confuting the folly of a sect which styled a dead man of Palestine, God, and the Son of God." Such are the words of Libanius, and certainly they are valuable for the object for which we cite them, namely to show what the early Christians really did believe.

What Libanius says of Porphyry and Julian.

A philosopher named Celsus, who lived in the second century, took the pains to write a book in refutation of the Christian religion. It is evident from those

portions of the book which have been preserved that a prominent point of his attack was the doctrine in question. We find for instance, that he ridiculed the idea of the wise men from the East worshipping Christ as God, and urges his flight into Egypt and other circumstances of His life as inconsistent with His being God. Speaking of the Burial-place of Christ, he ridicules the inconsistency of the Christians in blaming the worshippers of Jupiter whose tomb was shewn in Crete, while they worshipped as God a man buried in Palestine. "If these men," says he, "worshipped but one God, they might perhaps have reason to inveigh against others; but now they act superstitiously towards him who lately appeared, and yet they think that God is not neglected if His servant also be worshipped." It is not at all unusual in the present day for people to make the same blunder as Celsus, and to suppose that Christians in worshipping Christ as Divine do really acknowledge a plurality of Gods. Further on, we find Celsus representing the Christians as always censuring the Jews for *not* admitting Christ to be God.

How Celsus remonstrated with Christians of his day.

A writer who was contemporary with Celsus, named Lucian, certifies to the same great fact. His words are, "The Christians *still* worship that great man who was crucified in Palestine." One little word in this quotation is particularly worthy of note. The word "*still*" most clearly carries back the usage spoken of to a period considerably anterior to that in which Lucian wrote. Now, when it is borne in mind that Lucian penned the above

What Lucian certifies on this point.

sentence probably not much more than fifty years after the death of John the last of the Apostles, it will appear that, on the testimony of unbelievers, the worship of Christ as Divine, by Christians, stretches back to the very era of the Apostles themselves.

A possible objection and its answer.

But we can conceive an objector saying, "You must always make allowance for exaggeration in the heat of controversy; probably those ancient disputants took no special pains to ascertain what the Christians actually believed; they rather grounded the monstrous charge on *appearances*, and, because the Christians evinced unexampled devotion to their Master, they chose to magnify this

* Very recently a remarkable discovery was made among the ruins of the Palatine palace in Rome. It is a rough sketch, traced on the pavement, of a human figure with an ass's head, bound to a Cross. By the side of the Cross stands a man in an attitude of devotion, he is worshipping the Crucified monster, underneath is rudely scrawled in Greek the following inscription—"Alexamenos adores his God!" There can be no doubt as to the drift and intent of this representation. It is well known that, in the days of fiercest persecution the followers of Christ were to be met with even in the palaces of the Roman Emperors. Alexamenos has been one of these; and, in mockery of his devotion to Jesus, some member of the royal household traced this revolting caricature of the Object of his worship. We learn from some of the Christian Apologists that it was not an unusual thing for the heathen to sneer at the Christians and taunt them with worshipping an ass's head. There is something very solemn and suggestive in this strange relic of pagan animosity coming to light after the lapse of 16 centuries; but the one object for which we cite it, is to strengthen the position we have laid down, that the heathen themselves are witnesses to the fact that the early Christians did actually *worship the Crucified One as God.*

devotion into a charge of idolatrous worship." The proper and complete answer to this hypothesis will be a citation of the replies of the Christian Apologists to their heathen assailants. It will thus be seen whether they dealt with the charges as calumnies or facts, whether they regarded their opponents, in this respect, as traducers or as truthful witnesses. Listen, O Reader, whilst those holy men of old speak for themselves and for their faith.

Arnobius' prompt response.

First of all, mark how Arnobius meets the accusation of the heathen above cited. He says, "The Christians *do really worship* Christ, but that is from their indubitable knowledge that *He is the true God* : and they are bound to worship Him as the Head of their body. And should a Gentile ask, 'Is Christ God?' We answer, He is God, and God of the interior powers, that is, the Searcher of hearts, which is the sole prerogative of God."

Minutius Felix speaks.

Minutius Felix, another Christian writer, somewhat earlier than Arnobius, says in reference to the taunt of the heathen that Christians worshipped a crucified man, "They are mistaken, for He whom we worship *is God*, and not a mere mortal man."

Tertullian's testimony.

Tertullian, an eloquent writer in the early part of the third century, meets the accusations of unbelievers in these emphatic words, "We worship Christ, because we know Him to be the true natural Son of God by spiritual regeneration, and therefore called God ; and the Son of God, because He was one and of the same essence

and substance; He was begotten of God in such a manner as to be God, and the Son of God, and they were both one."

Cyprian.

Cyprian the Bishop of Carthage, A. D. 250, expresses the Church's faith in Christ's person and offices thus—"We have an Advocate and an Intercessor for our sins, Jesus Christ, *the Lord and our God.*"

Irenæus.

Irenæus, a Bishop in France, somewhat earlier than Cyprian, says, "Every knee shall bow to Jesus Christ, our *Lord and God*, our Saviour and King." And again, "In both Testaments Christ is preached as God and Lord, the King eternal, the only Begotten, the Word incarnate."

Contemporary with Irenæus was the learned and able Origen. He is combating the attacks of Celsus. The latter accused Christians of worshipping Christ as the Son of God and as God himself. Origen replies,

Origen answers Celsus.

"If Celsus had understood the meaning of this, 'I and the Father are One,' he would never have imagined that we worship any but the God who is over all, for Christ says, 'The Father is in me and I in him.'"

The next witness we shall cite will be Novatian, a very noted presbyter of Rome in the third century. The extract, it will be seen, is of special interest, it is an elaborate enunciation of the Church's faith; but it does more than say *what* the Church believed, it gives the *grounds* on which that belief rested. Its appeal is to the testimony of holy Scripture on the solemn topic under discussion. It will be seen that Novatian read in

his copy of the New Testament sixteen centuries ago the very same passages as Christians now-a-days point to as illustrating the Godhead of Christ,—a complete answer to those who have the boldness to suggest that these and kindred passages were, in the dark ages, foisted into the Christian Scriptures.

Novatian's noteworthy argument.

Novatian argues—"Whereas it is the property of none but God to know the secrets of the heart, and yet *Christ knows what is in man;* whereas it is in the power of none but God to forgive sins, yet *Christ does forgive sins;* whereas it is of *no man* to descend from heaven, and yet *He descended from heaven;* whereas no man could utter that saying, *I and my Father are one,* and Christ alone, from a consciousness of his divinity, said it; and whereas finally, the Apostle Thomas, furnished as he was with every proof of Christ's divinity, said in answer to Him, *my Lord and my God:* whereas the Apostle St. Paul writes in his epistle, *whose are the fathers, and from whom according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for evermore;* whereas the same Apostle declares that he was made an apostle *not by man or through man, but by Jesus Christ;* upon all these accounts we must conclude that Christ is God." It will be observed that the words italicised are all references to Scripture language.

The testimony of the foregoing Christian writers belongs to the *third century*; they all lived and wrote prior to the Council of Nice. It is true, in their days there was no authoritative Creed asserting the Deity of Christ; but we are fairly entitled to ask whether any formula whatever could express more strongly and

decidedly faith in that solemn doctrine than did the writings of those holy men. It must moreover be borne in mind that, the writers whose words we have cited did not belong to one country but several, not to one Church but various Churches. We have thus the testimony of Irenæus in France, of Cyprian in Africa, and of Novatian in Rome, combining in one unbroken note of harmony on the grand subject before us.

The value of the preceding testimony.

But, besides those who enlightened the Church and the world by their writings, there is another class of witnesses whose voice should be heard. Let us hear what the "noble army of martyrs" say on the subject before us. Listen, dear reader, to the dying cries of some of those who gladly shed their blood for Christ's sake. Felix, an African Bishop, when condemned to death, raised his eyes to heaven and thus devoutly prayed,—"O Lord God of heaven and earth, Jesus Christ, to Thee do I bend my neck by way of sacrifice; O Thou who abidest for ever, to whom belong glory and majesty, world without end, Amen!" Theodotus of Ancyra, when about to suffer, cried, "O Lord Jesus Christ, Thou Maker of heaven and earth, who forsakest not them that put their trust in Thee, I give Thee thanks that Thou hast made me meet to be a citizen of Thy heavenly city and to have a share in Thy Kingdom!" As the body of Euplius was being torn on the rack, the Magistrate implored him to recant; "Unhappy man," said he, "adore the gods and you shall be free." Euplus said, "I worship the Father and the Son and the

The testimony of the noble Army of Martyrs.

Holy Ghost, I adore the Holy Trinity, beside whom there is no God. Perish the gods who did not make heaven and earth. I am a Christian." "Offer sacrifice," said the Prefect, "and you shall be released." "I," said Euplius, "sacrifice myself only to Christ my God." But the time would fail us to mention the martyrs by name; suffice it to add here a list of devout breathings which escaped the lips of other holy Confessors when suffering for Christ's sake—"O Christ, Thou Son of God, deliver Thy servants." "O Lord Jesus Christ, Thou art our hope, Thee do we serve." "O God most Holy, O God most High, O God Almighty." "O Christ, let me not be confounded." "I pray Thee, Christ, hear me; I thank Thee my God."

Thus far then, the evidence adduced must, to any candid man, establish the fact that, say, *anno domini* 250, the Church throughout Christendom fully and heartily held the doctrine of the true and essential Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ. So that if the doctrine were an innovation, we must seek for its introduction at an earlier period. The beloved Apostle John died somewhere about A. D. 100; thus, between the era we have reached and the close of the Apostolic age, there remains a period of 150 years; the question is, can it be shown that the doctrine took its origin at any time during that period, the Church being strange to it before?

The doctrine held by the whole Church A. D. 250.

Happily we have a very sufficient reply to the above query. We beg you, good reader, to journey with us *one hundred years* up the stream of time, this will land

Tatian's testimony. us at a period about 50 years after the death of John. At that time a Christian writer of considerable note flourished. His name was Tatian. He was the Author of a work called the *Diatessaron*, a Harmony of the four Gospels.* Amongst the few remains of his writings which have come down to us, the following sentence occurs in one of his disputations with the Greeks;—"We are not senseless nor trifle with you O Greeks, when we declare that *God was born in the form of man.*"

Contemporaneously with Tatian several very striking Hymns were used in the devotions of Christians. One of these, the "Gloria in excelsis" is of surpassing beauty and sublimity. It is still used in the Eucharistic Offices of many Churches.

The morning Hymn of the early Christians. To the primitive Christians it was a morning song of praise; as each day dawned, those early followers of Jesus poured forth the hallowed strains. What were those strains? Hearken O Reader, and may your soul catch the sacred fire which burns in those fervid utterances! After a tribute of praise to the Father, the second stanza goes on to invoke the Divine Son in these terms—"O Lord, the only begotten Son Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us * * * for Thou only art holy, Thou only art the Lord, Thou only O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father."

* An interesting proof by the way that the Four Gospels then existed.

Every evening also those early Christians summed up the day's duties with another song of praise. It is less known in the present day than the other, but it is equally valuable as testifying to the great truth we are establishing—that the early Christians ever recognised Jesus as Divine and paid to Him the honours of Deity. The Evening hymn runs thus—

Their evening Hymn.

"Hail! gladdening Light, of His pure glory poured,
Who is the Immortal Father, heavenly, blest,
Holiest of Holies—Jesus Christ our Lord!
Now we are come to the sun's hour of rest,
The lights of evening round us shine,
We hymn the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost Divine!
Worthiest art Thou at all times to be sung
With undefiled tongue,
Son of our God, Giver of life, Alone!
Therefore in all the world, Thy glories, Lord, they own."

Surely these devout breathings of the early Church leave no room for doubt as to its view of Christ its exalted Head!

The next name which we adduce is that of Ignatius; it is a name worthy to be held in reverence, for Ignatius is one of those sacred links which actually unite us to the apostolic age. He was a disciple of the apostle John; in his youth he sat at the feet of the very disciple who had lain in the bosom of the Saviour and drank in the truth from his lips. Our readers will at once see the importance of the utterances of such a man in the case before us. Did Ignatius then believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ? Let him speak for himself—here are his own words, "Christ was of the race of

The testimony of Ignatius.

David according to the flesh, the Son of God according to divinity and power, truly born of a virgin, *our God Jesus Christ*, the Son of man and the Son of God."

Another disciple of St. John was the martyred Polycarp. Before laying down his life for Christ's sake, he addressed a letter to the Church of the Philippians. In that epistle he fervently prays that "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Eternal Priest Himself, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, would build up his readers in faith and truth and in all meekness, and would give them a part and lot among the Saints." Afterwards when he was bound to the stake, and his body was about to be consumed, the holy confessor breathed out his dying prayer thus—"For all things O God, do I praise and bless and glorify Thee, together with the Eternal and heavenly Jesus Christ, Thy well-beloved Son, with whom, to Thee and the Holy Ghost, be glory both now and for ever, Amen." Elsewhere he calls Christ "the everlasting Son of God" and says, "All things in heaven and earth obey Him."

The testimony of Polycarp and the Church of Smyrna.

After the death of Polycarp the Christians of the Church of Smyrna published a memoir of him, their beloved Bishop. Very striking is one passage as noting the distinction which they drew between the honor due to Christ and the martyrs. They say, "For *Him* indeed we do *adore* as being the *Son of God*, but the martyrs, as disciples and imitators of the Lord we worthily love by reason of their unsurpassed devotion to Him their own King and Teacher."

Perhaps the earliest of *uninspired* Christian writings

is the Epistle of Barnabas. Not a few learned men have concluded that it was actully written by Barnabas the companion of St. Paul; others again dispute this; the point however of real importance with us is, not so much the Authorship of the book as *its date*. Now there is the most convincing evidence that this epistle was in existence before the death of John.* The testimony of this book must, therefore, be regarded as somewhat anterior to that of Ignatius, in short, it takes us back *into* the apostolic age.

The epistle of Barnabas.

It would occupy too much space to cite all the passages in this ancient document in which the deity of Christ is involved and implied. The following must serve as specimens; we read, "The Lord submitted to suffer for our souls, although He be the Lord of the whole earth, to whom He said before the formation of the world, let us make man after our image and likeness. For if He had not come in the flesh how could we men have been saved?"—"If then the Son of God who is Lord, and hereafter to judge the quick and the dead, suffered that He might make us alive, let us believe that the Son of God could not have suffered but through us."—"You are informed concerning the majesty of Christ, how all things were made for him and through Him."

It must not by any means be inferred that the authorities cited represent the whole amount of evidence adducible.

More witnesses might be cited.

* The learned Dr. Tischendorff after carefully examining the oldest manuscript copy of the epistle extant affirms that beyond doubt the work existed prior to A. D. 100.

We have simply put before our readers, so to speak, a *specimen copy* of the Church's faith before that faith was embodied in a formal Creed. Many more witnesses might be produced if needful. Eusebius, the Church historian of primitive times, shews that the divinity of Christ was asserted in the writings of Justyn Martyr, Miltiades, Clement, Melito and many others who followed closely after the apostolic age. It must, at any rate, be admitted by any candid reader that the notion of a gradual evolution of the doctrine of Christ's divinity in post-apostolic times must be given up as altogether contrary to fact; it must further be conceded that the declarations of pre-Nicene writers on this subject were as full and clear and positive as are the statements of the Creed itself. We have seen, moreover, that the same doctrine was held by Christians not only at all *times*, but in all *places*, not by a portion of the Church in a given country, but by all portions of the Church in every land. We perceive too that the doctrine held was strictly one and the same; we can trace no varying shades of sentiment on this topic. In matters of lesser moment varieties of opinion and expression among early Christian writers may be seen, but in reference to this grand fundamental truth the utterances of the Church Catholic have been marked by wondrous uniformity.

What is clearly made out.

Looking to the Creed we find this declaration of faith, "I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God, begotten before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten,

not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man." The reader has only to place side by side with these dogmatic statements of the Nicene Creed the foregoing utterances of holy men who lived before the Creed was framed to see that the very same view as it propounds was held and taught in the church up to the very days of the Apostles themselves. Indeed the words of the Creed put forth A. D. 325 strike the ear almost as an echo of the devout breathings of the venerable Ignatius, uttered two centuries before. "Christ," says he, "was of the race of David according to the flesh, the Son of God according to divinity and power, truly born of a Virgin—our God Jesus Christ, the Son of man and the Son of God."

The Nicene creed re-echoes the utterances of Ignatius and others.

We have thus seen that the doctrine of the essential deity of Jesus Christ, like a glorious rainbow, spans the whole history of the primitive Church; one foot rests on the confines of the Apostolic age, the other on the era of the Council of Nice. Our next chapter will carry our argument another stage along the path of enquiry.

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CHAPTER IV.

What the Apostles thought of Christ.

We have already seen that the primitive Christians and the Apostolic fathers held in all its integrity the doctrine of the true and essential divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. The next question which naturally suggests itself is—whence did they derive this doctrine and who taught it them?

Now, we have traced this doctrine up to the very era of the Apostles, and it is undeniable that, if it were an invention, it was invented during the lifetime of at least one Apostle; we freely admit that the fact of its early origin neither proves its truth, nor yet its accordance with the teaching of the Apostles. There was no lack of teachers of error in the Apostolic age and several of the foulest heresies then first saw the light. But there is one thing worthy of note in this respect;—we see that the Apostles in their writings denounce with unsparing severity the false doctrines which marked their day, and, what is very remarkable, the Apostle who is most unflinching and out-spoken in his censure of those errors, is the loving and beloved disciple St. John. He especially anathematises the Gnostic heresy which denied the true incarnation of Christ; and he does this in some of his latest writings

The Apostle denounced many heresies but this was not one of them.

at a time when, without doubt, the doctrine of the deity of Christ had a footing in the Church. Now it may fairly be argued that this error, had it been an error, must to the mind of John have eclipsed by its magnitude every other error of the day; the fact therefore of his *not* denouncing the error is utterly inexplicable—inexplicable, that is, on the supposition that he himself did not hold the doctrine to be true.

We may leave, however, the negative argument behind us. We have only to glance through the writings of the favoured disciple of Jesus to see, that he held and proclaimed and gloried in the truth of Christ's divinity as the very key-stone of the Christian Fabric. One hardly knows where to begin our quotations in support of this statement, for the doctrine in question intersects or rather *permeates*, the writings of this Apostle. Dogmatic statements of the doctrine are not numerous, for the very reason that its truth is assumed throughout. We will give, however, a few specific and pointed passages in which the doctrine is clearly implied or expressed. First of all, we would beg our readers to note the Apostle's forcible and reiterated assertions of the divine Sonship of Christ.

The doctrine permeates St. John's writings.

"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God." John IV. 15.

"Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God." John V. 5.

"He that hath the Son hath life, but he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." John V. 12.

"And we know that the Son of God has come and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." John V. 20.

Importance of the last sentence.

Nothing could be more plain and emphatic than the concluding sentence of this last passage. It fairly meets and annihilates the objection of those who would affix to the term "Son of God" a meaning somewhat short of actual deity. Whatever may be the nature of that mysterious union in the Godhead whereby the first Person in the blessed Trinity is called *Father* and the second, *Son*, that relation perfectly accords with the essential deity of the *Son*, for, says the Apostle, "This (*i. e.*, the Son) *is the true God* and eternal life."

The testimony of St. John's Gospel.

The above passages are taken from the *Epistles* of St. John; we would now bespeak attention to a remarkable utterance of the same Apostle in the Gospel composed by him a few years later. It constitutes a noble exordium to the Gospel and strikes its key-note; that key-note is—the *God-man Christ Jesus.* The whole drift of that wondrous document is to shew that the Prophet of Nazareth was, "perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting."*

The passage we cite runs thus:—"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: the same was in the beginning with God: All things were made by him, and without Him

* Athanasian Creed.

was not anything made that was made. In him was life and the life was the light of men * * * He was in the world, and the world was made by him, yet the world knew Him not * * * And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, (the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth * * * no man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." John I. 1-14.

A necessary inference.

We may well ask whether, after reading the above passage, any doubt can remain in the mind of a candid man as to what St. John thought and taught about Christ. If he did *not* believe in his essential divinity what reason can be assigned for his using such language as was sure to mislead his readers?

The efforts of unbelievers to shake this bulwark.

It is not a matter of surprise that this marvellous passage has been in all ages, a stumblingblock and rock of offence to the impugners of the doctrine involved. Unitarians and Socinians have left no stone unturned in their efforts to shake this bulwark of Catholic truth. They have assailed it with the shafts of the keenest criticism and have labored to cast a doubt upon its authenticity and genuineness; when this attempt has failed—as it has most conspicuously—they have tried the arts of subtle and disingenuous interpretation; they have wrangled about the sense of words and phrases, and, by a cloud of words, have striven to wrest the passage from its legitimate sense. * Utterly futile has been

* Should any of our readers still be disposed to try their skill

every effort of the kind; the passage has stood for eighteen centuries like a mighty rock of truth, unshaken by the tumultuous waves of error which have dashed against it.

A good deal of controversy has turned upon the meaning of the peculiar expression, "The Word." Unbelievers in Catholic doctrine have been fain to make out that this is not really a proper name or title of the Lord Jesus Christ. They say John never meant to use it as such. Unfortunately for their assumption, there is another passage in the writings of this apostle in which its application to Christ is unmistakably shewn. In Rev. XIX, St. John, in a graphic description of the approaching advent of Christ says, "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and *His name is called the Word of God.*"

That the expression "Word of God" was not un-

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in making the above passage speak other than Catholic truth, we earnestly commend to their attention the following solemn soliloquy suggested to such as they by the late Dr. Pye Smith—"Am I not inwardly sensible that, in my attempts to frame an interpretation of this paragraph which may wear at all the semblance of consistency, I am rowing against the stream; I am putting language to the torture; I am affixing significations to words and phrases, which all my efforts can scarcely keep me from exclaiming that they could never have been in the contemplation of the original writer? Have I not then awakening reasons for the suspicion that I have not framed my opinions with that close and faithful investigation which the solemn greatness of the case requires? Am I not bound to review the whole subject in the sight of the all-seeing God, and under the sense of my accountableness to Him as the Author and Revealer of truth?"

Philo a witness in this case.

known in its personal reference among non-Christians is perfectly clear from the statements of Philo, a Jew of Alexandria. He was contemporary with Jesus Christ, but manifestly knew nothing of His history; he, however, as a Jew, educated in the School of Alexandria, speaks of the Messiah whom he and other Jews expected, in precisely similar terms to those used by John; he calls Him, "the *Divine Word*" "the Son of God," "the First-begotten," "the Image of God" &c.

Students of the New Testament cannot fail to have noticed that among the twelve Apostles there were three, Peter, James and John, to whom the Lord Jesus manifested special regard and whom he admitted to a closer intimacy than was vouchsafed to the rest. These were the favoured witnesses of several of the most solemn events of His life. We have heard what one of the trio thought and taught of his Lord; let us now listen to the testimony of another.

The favoured three.

On the occasion as Jesus was journeying with his disciples in the region of Cæsarea Philippi, he put to them an important question; He enquired, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" The disciples replied by mentioning the various rumours and speculations which were current at the time. Hereupon the Saviour put to them a still more pointed query; he asked, "But whom say ye that I am?" Peter, as the mouth-piece of the rest, promptly responded, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Matt. XVI. 16.

A pointed query.

This whole passage is one of weighty import in this discussion, and we purpose in another chapter more fully to consider it as a whole; at present we simply cite Peter's reply as indicating his and his brother Apostles' belief respecting Christ. We can conceive some one saying here.—"It is true Peter confessed that Christ was the Son of God, and nobody disputes that fact; we are all the Sons of God, and of course he was the Son of God in the same sense that other men are."

A weak objection.

Now, we are quite sure, it is only necessary to call the reader's attention to the passage before us to satisfy him, that the term "Son of God" in Peter's mouth meant something very much more than this. The disciples had stated that men generally regarded Christ as an eminent prophet; some even looked upon him as none other than Jeremias or Elias, whose reappearance in the world certain traditions had led them to expect. Now, Peter's reply manifestly indicated that Christ was greater than those distinguished prophets. But according to the idea above suggested, Peter's confession implied no pre-eminence whatever on Christ's part, it simply told Christ that he, as a man, was a Son of God, as were the disciples themselves and indeed all other men. The idea of such a silly and gratuitous acknowledgement is too absurd to require refutation. The answer of Christ to Peter "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this to thee, but my Father which is in heaven" would be simply meaningless if Peter had only given expression to a truism which nobody could be ignorant of.

Its clear refutation.

It is abundantly clear that Peter's avowal declared his conviction of the divine Sonship of Christ. He said, "Thou art the *Christ*," *i. e.*, the Messiah; and "The Son of the living God" *i. e.*, the co-equal and co-eternal Son of the Father. If any one wishes to know the awful importance which the Jews attached to the title "Son of God" used in connexion with a claim to the Messiahship, let him turn to the record of the trial of Christ before the great Jewish Sanhedrim. The president of that Council, the High Priest, having tried in vain to procure the conviction of the august Prisoner on the evidence of others, resolves to cut the matter short by inciting him to criminate himself. "The high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, 'the Son of God?'" This was in fact the confession of Peter turned into the form of a solemn adjuration. "He makes himself to be the Son of God";—this was the indictment, the charge laid against him, and to this the High priest adjured him to plead. Cannot our readers see the folly of supposing that he was accused of calling himself a Son of God in the sense in which all men are such? In that case, where was the crime? where the offence? His judges well knew the Divine dignity involved in the claim; consequently we read, after the Saviour had in the most emphatic terms admitted the truth of the charge, and declared himself to be the Son of God, "Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, he hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold now ye have

How the Jews understood the title "Son of God."

heard his blasphemy ; what think ye ? They answered and said, he is guilty of death." Matt. XXVII. 62-66. What ! Did he blaspheme in claiming to be a Son of God as all men are ? and was that the crime for which he was condemned to death ?*

Peter meant what the high priest meant.

The truth is, what the high priest meant by the expression "Son of God" that Peter meant. Peter's answer was therefore an avowal of his faith in the divine Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor will the candid Reader fail to note the further fact that, the answer of Jesus in each case fully endorsed this as the true sense of that solemn formula.

The testimony of Peter's epistles.

The two epistles of Peter were written some 30 years after he made the confession on which we have been dwelling. As was said of the epistles of St. John, so may we say of these—from beginning to end they go on the assumption of the Deity of Christ, and expressions ever and anon are applied to Him which would be blasphemous,

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* Even at the risk of anticipating what we have to say in another Chapter, we cannot avoid asking the reader whether, if Christ had *not* meant to declare himself such a Son of God as they supposed, he could have remained silent at that juncture, whether he could have done otherwise than repudiate with horror the assumption that he claimed the prerogative of Deity when he simply avowed himself an ordinary human son of God. If the silence meant not assent it was guilty in the highest degree ; but few men deny that Jesus was a holy man ; as a holy man he could not have been silent ; if, on the other hand, it be said he was a wicked man, the query arises, would a wicked man have been silent when by correcting the mistake of his judges he could have saved his life?

if used with reference to any other than God. In two or three passages, for instance, we find the Apostle ascribing "Praise and dominion and glory to Jesus Christ for ever and ever." 1 Pet. iv. 11 ; 2 Pet. iii. 18. In another passage, in speaking of the Holy Spirit of God, by whose inspiration the prophets had, ages before, foretold the sufferings of Christ, he says that, that Spirit was "*The Spirit of Christ.*" In other words, he declares that Christ, by His Spirit in the prophets, foretold his own sufferings ages before His incarnation. 1 Pet. i. 11.

In connection with these apostolic ascriptions of the attributes and titles of Deity to Jesus Christ, one's thoughts revert to the remarkable confession of the Apostle St. Thomas. Feeble in faith, this good man had been unable to credit the fact of his Lord's resurrection. Nothing, he declared, would convince him unless he might put his hand into the wounded side of Jesus and thrust his finger into his lacerated palms. The strange request was granted ; a few days after Jesus again stood in the midst of his disciples ; turning to Thomas, he said, "Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands ; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side ; and be not faithless but believing." Whether Thomas actually touched the Saviour or not is doubtful—most probably he did *not* ; about one thing, however, there is no doubt whatever—his faith in his risen Lord was at once established ; we read, "And Thomas answered and said unto him, my Lord and my God." John XX. 27, 28.

The confession of St. Thomas.

We have thus fully quoted the context in order to

answer a most weak and unworthy objection which is sometimes urged in connection with this passage. Unitarians generally meet Thomas' plain avowal by saying "O! but that was a mere exclamation of surprise addressed, so far as it was addressed to any one, to God the Father." They illustrate their meaning by pointing to the ejaculations so common in the mouths of men, as "Lord! Good Lord! O my God &c!" Now, besides the fact that this is a purely gratuitous hypothesis, which needed a prior disbelief in the doctrine involved to give it birth, there is the most convincing evidence of its falsity in the passage before us. First of all, note *Whom* Thomas actually addressed when he used those remarkable words; the Unitarian says, he addressed the Father; the text on the contrary says, "And Thomas *answered and said to him*," that *him* is undeniably *Jesus*, the same as had appealed to Thomas. Next, note the reply of Jesus, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed;" believed what? Why, manifestly, that which he had just confessed. Thus the Saviour clearly accepts Thomas' confession of faith as made to himself, though He gently chides its tardiness. Again, the supposition that Thomas, as a Jew, used the name of God as a mere ejaculation of surprise is improbable to the last degree. Everybody knows that the Jews were most punctilious in their reverence for the name of the Deity. Whatever may be the case with many who profess and call themselves Christians, no devout Jew (and Thomas was a devout Jew) could have let the solemn

A groundless objection refuted.

words in question escape his lips as a mere exclamation.

We come now to the testimony of St. Paul. It is impossible to look back upon the history of this remarkable man without attaching special importance to what he says on the subject before us. As we note his full, clear, and devout ascriptions of divine honor to Jesus, let us never forget that the speaker was once the bitterest enemy of Christ and His Church; that he had abhorred the crucified Nazarene as a foul impostor; that he had breathed out threatnings and slaughter against his followers; and had imbrued his hands in their innocent blood. In his case, at least, there was no prior sympathy, no party bias, no mental tendency in favor of the claims of Jesus. All his previous feelings, convictions, tastes, were deadly opposed to those claims. Surely then, the only logical inference we can draw from the fact of his conversion is, that he had met with evidence so complete, so overpowering, of the truth of those claims, that he could no longer resist its influence; humbled, subdued, asham-

The light which Paul's history throws upon his testimony.

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* Nothing more need be urged to convince the candid reader that Thomas actually addressed and meant to address those words to Jesus; but, this being admitted, what can such a reader make of the fact that Jesus acquiesced in, approved of, and commended the confession of Thomas? What! Jesus, a humble and holy man, (and everybody admits him to have been such) and yet, instead of rebuking Thomas' blasphemy, he praised it, and, instead of being horrified at the ascription "my Lord and my God" calmly accepted it as his due! Solve, dear reader, the problem as best you can!

ed and convinced, he fell at the feet of the once despised Jesus; henceforward he devoted all his talents and energies to His service, and at last laid down his life for Christ, and sealed with his blood the truths which he had taught. Let us hear what he believed and taught respecting the person and character of his Lord.

St. Paul was the author of fourteen epistles of the New Testament. The doctrine of Christ's divinity, as an assumed fact, pervades each epistle. At present all that we can do is, to select a few of the more positive statements of the doctrine which bestud the apostle's writings. Let the reader carefully note and honestly weigh the following passages and let him say what they mean, if they do *not* mean to declare that Jesus Christ is the Almighty and Eternal God.

We cite a few of the more salient passages.

Rom. IX. 5. "Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen."

Col. I. 14-17. "He (Christ) is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities or powers; all things were created by Him and for Him; and he is before all things, and by Him all things consist."

Col. II. 9, "In Him (Christ) dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

Phil. II. 5,6. "Let this mind be in you which

was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God." *

Titus. II. 13. "Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of *the great God our Saviour Jesus Christ.*"

1. Tim. III, 16. "God was manifest in the flesh."

Heb. I 2, 3. "God hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." †

* Should the reader hear, as we have heard a captious individual carp at the Apostle's phraseology, and say that, "the *form* of God" means something less than God, we would simply ask him to look at the very next verse for a comment on the disputed expression. The apostle uses the very same word in speaking of Christ's *humanity*; he says, "He took upon him the *form* of a servant, and was made in the *likeness* of man." Now, the only question here is, did St. Paul intend by this phraseology to represent Christ as really and truly human or not? If he did—and there is no creature who doubts this—then we must in common sense admit that Paul used the same phraseology in the same positive way in the preceding verse; in other words, as "by form and likeness of man" he meant to say Christ was really man, so by the expression, "form of God" he meant to say that he was really God.

† The reader will here again trace the peculiar phraseology of St. Paul. The words "express image of God," are equivalent to

Rom. XIV. 10, 11. "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ; for it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God."

This last passage is deserving of special note. First of all, it is very evident that the Apostle represents Christ as the future Judge of all mankind, just as in a previous passage, he has declared Him to be the Creator of all things in heaven and earth. (Col I. 14-17) The next thing to be noted is the quotation from the Old Testament, manifestly He who is described as the Judge is the same as speaks in the quotation. Let us see whence the apostle cites those striking words. They occur in the midst of a sublime and almost awful passage in Isaiah XLV. 22,23, which runs thus, "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." No one can deny that the speaker in Isaiah is Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts; the application of these words, therefore, to Christ by St. Paul sufficiently demonstrates the fact that he regarded Jesus as the high and eternal God, the same God as announces Himself in the context as the Creator of heaven and earth.

What is involved in this last passage?

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the term "form of God" occurring in a preceding citation, and the explanatory note appended to the latter expression equally applies to the former.

Just to give the reader a view of the way in which the idea of Christ's divinity pervades the writings of this apostle, and is assumed as a *fact* when he has no notion of asserting it as a doctrine, we will quote a passage or two of another kind.

How St. Paul assumes the truth of the doctrine.

1 Thess. I. 1. "To the Church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ; Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Thess. III. 11. "Now God himself and our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you."

2 Thess. I. 12. "The Grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ."

2 Thess. II. 16, 17. "Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father * * * comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work."

2 Cor. VIII. 9. "Ye know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that *though he was rich*, for your sakes He became poor."

2 Cor. XIII. 14. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen."

Now suppose a person utterly ignorant of creeds and dogmas and theological controversies to read the above passages, what possible theory could he ground upon them? He sees two August Beings referred to—

"God the Father," and "the Lord Jesus Christ." He perceives there is not a word to imply anything like relative superiority or inferiority between the two; all that is said denotes simple and complete equality.

What inference must an unbiassed reader draw from those passages?

The Church—the body of believers, is said to be "in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ." Prayer is addressed to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ conjointly; no distinction appears in the form of appeal; moreover, grace, peace, comfort and spiritual strength are spoken of as proceeding both from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ; here also there is not a vestige of distinction discernible. Thus the unlettered reader sees those two August Beings stand relatively in juxta-position; he sees that the same worship is tendered to each and the same attributes ascribed to each; he notes moreover that the relative *order* in which the names occur discourages the idea of relative disparity; for, whereas in some passages the name of the Father stand *first*, and the Son *second*, in other cases this order is reversed. What other conclusion could an unbiassed reader come to than that expressed in that form of sound words, the Athanasian Creed, "Such as the Father is, such also is the Son."

There are two other witnesses, who although they were not numbered amongst the apostles of Christ, yet have a right to be heard on this momentous question. Behold then, dear Reader, the last of the prophets, the holy, the austere, the self-denying Baptist; there he stands; the wilderness for his home, his ward-

robe a camel's skin, his diet locusts and wild honey! Myriads upon myriads, awed by his solemn mien and stirred by his burning eloquence, are already prone to honor him as the expected Messiah; at that time Jesus had done nothing to make himself famous; He stood amongst the crowd that surrounded John, unnoticed by any but the inspired preacher; the Baptist, however, as he declares, by a divine monition had discerned him; and he instantly cries, "I am not the Christ; * * but there standeth one among you whom ye know not; He it is who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoes' latchet I am not worthy to unloose." John I. 20,25,26. Again, when the disciples of that holy man, moved with loving jealousy for their Master's honor, noted the fact that "all men were going to Christ," we find him chiding their concern thus, "Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him * * *, He must increase but I must decrease; He that is from above is above all; he that is of the earth is earthy, and speaketh of the earth; He that is from heaven is above all." John III. 28, 30, 31.

The testimony of John the Baptist.

What then is the sum of the Baptist's testimony to Christ—delivered, as we would again remind the reader before the Saviour had done a single miracle or was in any way known to fame? It amounts to this,—John declares that though Jesus had "come after him" yet He was "before him;" that this same Jesus who appeared so mean and lowly, was infinitely greater than himself, insomuch that he was not worthy to perform

for Him the most menial office; and finally, that, whilst he himself was "of the earth, earthy," *i. e.*, a mere man, the August Being of whom he testifies was "from above," "from heaven" and was "above all"—expressions which exactly harmonise with the brief and decided utterance of St. Paul that, Christ was "God over all, blessed for ever."

Nor can we omit from the list of witnesses the protomartyr, St. Stephen. It is his death-scene; he is surrounded by his furious murderers, the stones are falling heavily upon his battered body; he looks to heaven and cries, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Thus his dying petition was addressed to Jesus; he gives back his spirit to Him who had created it, and asks to be admitted to the mansions of eternal bliss; "thereby," as Dr. Pye Smith observes, "asking the greatest good that immortal existence can receive, or even Omnipotent Love bestow." Falling on his knees, one more petition escapes him; still addressing that same Jesus he says, "Lord lay not this sin to their charge!" Plainly in these words he indicated the fact that Jesus was the Divine Adjudicator of men's moral deserts, the future Judge of all mankind. "And when he had said this he fell asleep." (Acts VII. 59,60.) Thus, the first of that noble army of martyrs who shed their blood for Christ's sake, died, as did the thousands who succeeded him, looking to Jesus as the Almighty and Eternal God.

St. Stephen's testimony.

What then is the sum of the whole matter? Did the apostles and disciples of Jesus believe Him divine

or not? Surely, but one answer is possible—they *did* so believe in Him; they did so worship Him. Should any reader still have doubts on this subject, we would ask him to reflect whether, *on the supposition that the apostles did believe in His Godhead and wished to proclaim it, they could have done so in more forcible terms than those they have actually used.* They describe Him as "God," as "the Lord," as "the brightness of the Father's glory," as "the Creator and Upholder of the Universe," as "the Lord, of life and glory," as "the Head over all things," as the adored of all in heaven, earth, and under the earth, as the Dispenser of every spiritual grace, as the Raiser of the dead, and, finally, as the future Judge of men and angels. If they, as Jews, quote and apply to Him passages from their sacred books, they show Him to be the "Emmanuel" (God with us) of Whom the holy prophets sang (Matt. I. 23), or the Lord of Hosts, the Jehovah, who declared by their mouths that, unto Him "every knee should bow and every tongue confess."

The sum of the whole matter.

Thus, to any reasonable man there is no escaping the conclusion that, the Apostles did recognise and rejoice in the actual divinity of their August Master. But, we have heard one and another reply, "O yes, we don't deny that the apostles made Him out to be God; but it may be they had an object in so doing, or perhaps they were blinded by enthusiasm and believed Him to be what they represented Him to be; but we attach little importance to what *they* said of Christ; the only question with us is—*what did Christ say of*

Himself?" You shall hear, good Reader, in due time, what Christ said of Himself; at the present we have to offer a word or two in reply to this strange statement. If it is implied that the Apostles were disingenuous in their representations of Christ, and that from some selfish object they proclaimed the deity of their Master contrary to His own teaching, the question arises, *what was that object?* Was it wordly ease, honor and aggrandisement? Was it gain of any earthly description which actuated them? You know it was *not*—you know—we all know, that the consequences to them of setting forth Christ as they did set Him forth was the sacrifice of every earthly good; their only gain was reproach, hatred, poverty, persecution, and for the most part, *death*. He is a bold man who will say that, the Apostles played a part to gain such a recompense, and shed their life's blood to confirm what they knew to be a lie. *

Did the Apostles write and speak thus in good faith?

* There are comparatively few persons who have the hardihood to advance the supposition of fraud against the Apostles; every thing in their history and tone repels the idea. In addition to what has been said above, one is inclined to ask whether, supposing they had resolved on the strange enterprise of inaugurating a new deity, it would have occurred to them to paint all the surroundings of their hero in such mean and repulsive colours;—the manger of Bethlehem, the Carpenter's shop of Nazareth, the weary, brow-beaten, homeless wanderer of Palestine; these are hardly features which they would have imported into their representation of him for whom they claimed the homage of the universe.

As regards the substantial truth of the Gospel history, even the unbelieving Rousseau could write—"Shall we suppose the evangelic narrative a mere fiction? Indeed, my friend, it bears not the marks

The other supposition makes them out to be honest but *mistaken.* Their enthusiasm misled them. Now, it has been well said, "No man is a hero to his own valet." The Apostles for the last 3½ years of the Saviour's life on earth were his constant companions, going with him from place to place, conversing with him in private, listening to him in public; they rarely left his side unless sent on some Missionary errand. Had he been a mere man, he must have been a *frail* man, infirmities of temper and errors of demeanour must from time to time have come before them; it is inconceivable that, notwithstanding all this, they deliberately made up their minds that he was the holy and eternal God. For it must be borne in mind that no parallel lies between *their* recognition of Christ as divine, and the deification of heroes among an idolatrous people. The Apostles were Jews and they knew of no God but One, and He the Personification of every conceivable perfection; on the other hand those who worship "gods many and lords many" have often exalted not only frail, but *vicious* men to divine honors; in their case prodigies of valour or skill command their reverence

Were they not honest but mistaken?

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of fiction; on the contrary, the history of Socrates, which nobody presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty, without obviating it: it is more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one only should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality contained in the Gospel, the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more astonishing character than the hero."

and devotion, moral perfection and innate purity come not into the account.

But it should always be remembered that, to the Apostles and the immediate followers of Christ, the marvellous fact of his Resurrection was the immoveable rock on which his Messianic and Divine claims rested. They had recognised and admitted those claims before his death; but their faith was not of that blindly enthusiastic character which nothing could affect; it *was* affected; it was indeed, for the moment, *shaken*, by the terrible closing scenes of the Saviour's life. As his lifeless body was laid in the grave, their hearts sank within them; they passed the dark interval between his death and resurrection with mourning and tears; "We trusted," said the sorrowing two to the august Stranger, Who accosted them, "that it had been He who should have redeemed Israel." Luke XXIV. 21. So far were the Apostles from unreasoning enthusiasm that, even when tidings of His rising had reached them, they suspended belief until, by ocular demonstration and personal intercourse, they should have assured themselves of the fact. To the devout Christian reader the hesitation of the Apostles to believe an event which the reiterated declarations of Christ should have taught them to expect, may seem strange and censurable, but this very fact is fatal to the enthusiastic theory. But indeed, as it has been again and again urged—could any amount of enthusiasm make them believe Christ a living man if he had been a lifeless

The Resurrection was the rock on which their faith rested.

Its incontrovertible evidence.

corpse ; could they have supposed that they ate with him, handled him, if they had done no such thing ? Suppose if you like, their liability to illusion from some fancied appearance, some passing vision ; but this was *not* a case of that nature, they saw him not once or twice, but often ; not for one day but during a period of forty days. In truth, the fact of the Resurrection was henceforth the basis of their teaching, the mainstay of their hope. All that they had learnt from the lips of their Lord concerning His person and office was thereby settled and sealed for ever. They could no more doubt the Resurrection than their own existence, and believing that, they could not but believe Him to be the eternal Son of God, the Saviour of the world. Bearing this in mind, we can understand the spirit which prompted them, a few days after the Saviour's ascension, to cry out to the unbelieving Jews in the streets of Jerusalem, " Ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted to you ; and killed the Prince of Life, whom God hath raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses." Acts III. 14-15.

CHAPTER V.

What Christ thought and said of himself.

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Our last chapter must, we think, have convinced every candid reader, that the Apostles and the immediate followers of Jesus did thoroughly believe and openly proclaim the divinity of their Lord and Master. Still, while admitting this, the reader may ask, and has a perfect right to ask, what authority they had from Christ Himself for thus thinking and teaching. It may be contended that the fact of their honestly believing the doctrine of His Godhead and dying in its defence, does not nessarily prove the truth of the doctrine, nor yet that Christ taught them the doctrine. The present chapter, therefore, furnishes the next link in the chain of evidence.

Had the Apostles authority from Christ for believing and teaching as they did?

Our heading, it will be seen, pre-supposes the *sincerity* of Christ, it implies that He said what He thought and thought what He said. We do not in this volume touch the case of those few and strange individuals who persist in regarding Jesus of Nazareth as an impostor; indeed it would be superfluous in us to fight their singular vagary; the whole Theistic world, with rare exceptions, chide the folly and rebuke the impiety of such a notion. We are dealing with those who, while they honor the character of Christ and admire his teaching, yet see not their way clear to admit His divine claims. The argument of such persons is, "Christ Himself never put forth these claims; His followers mistook

Christ's sincerity is taken for granted; Theists admit it.

His meaning and crowned Him with dignities which He neither asked for nor wished." More than once have we heard it said, "Only prove to us that Christ plainly avowed Himself to be divine and we will believe Him to be such."

This is just the thing which, God helping us, we intend to do. God grant that, to such of our readers as could make this declaration, the proof may be followed by the result indicated!

Certain preliminary considerations.

I. Before adducing the more direct and positive testimony borne by Christ to His own divinity, it will be helpful to pass in review certain considerations of a preliminary nature. These present themselves to us as indirect proofs or necessary indications of the doctrine we have to establish. To many minds proofs of this nature carry great force, and all the more because they appear to be *undesigned* and incidental.

The testimony of Christ's miracles.

(1.) The first point we notice are the *miracles* of Christ.* It is undeniable that Jesus did lay claim to miraculous power, and miraculous power of a special and incomparable character; He not only professed to do wonderful works, but he maintained that He did "such works

* For aught we know some of our readers may on *a priori* grounds repudiate the idea of miracles altogether. They may have satisfied themselves that a miracle is an absolute impossibility. Rousseau, who was at the same time a philosopher and a Freethinker, meets such a remark as this with ridicule; he says that, "to believe in a personal Almighty God and at the same time to deny the possibility of a miracle, is the height of absurdity." "But," you reply,

as no other man ever did." John XV. 25. It is impossible to read the Gospels without seeing the importance which He attached to the evidential character of His miracles as justifying the claims which He advanced. Prophets and Apostles have from time to time wrought miracles similar in kind to those performed by Jesus;

They were incomparable.

"are not the laws of the universe immutable? but a miracle is an infraction of those laws and, therefore, is impossible." We answer (1) by asking who told you that existing laws are immutable? If you believe in a God of the universe, then you must admit that the laws of the universe were His creation; can you then show any necessity which bound the Almighty Author of these laws to create such laws and no other? If He Himself be bound by such a law of necessity, then where is His supremacy? We must, therefore, admit that He was free to have formed laws of a different character to those He actually formed, and the same reason will compel us to admit His freedom to suspend or change existing laws when He sees good ground for so doing—hence a miracle as an infringement of existing law is still possible. But (2) why assume that miracles are infractions of law? Who does not see that there are laws within laws; primary and secondary laws, extraordinary laws and ordinary laws, and one class of laws intersecting, acting upon, modifying another class of laws? Doubtless, storms, earthquakes and the movements of comets are all regulated by fixed and settled laws; but these are extraordinary laws; they exist and operate, although we cannot trace them, as surely and accurately as those ordinary laws which come within our ken. Why then not infer that miraculous interpositions depend upon an extraordinary and unseen class of laws—laws which only the finger of God can touch and put in motion? This at any rate is possible, and we think not improbable; hence the hardihood and folly of a mortal man declaring that miracles are impossible! You can only say this, good Sir, when you have ransacked the Universe and mastered its whole system of laws with all their complicated action. Have you done this?

but the great feature of distinction appears in the fact that His wonders were the outgoings of *His own inherent power*, whilst Apostles and Prophets were prone to confess that it was "not by their own power or holiness" they worked such marvels, but by the power of God committed to them.

The miraculous part of the Gospel History has ever been a stumblingblock to those who cling to the Humanitarian theory. It is almost amusing, if the subject were not of so grave a nature, to see the strange shifts and devices of such persons in their efforts to eliminate the miraculous element, and to present a portrait of Jesus stript of every supernatural feature. They have, for instance, laid hold upon a certain class of cures performed by Christ, and innocently suggested that, after all, these things might be explained on natural grounds; the suddenness of a shock or the emotions of intense enthusiasm towards Christ of the sufferers might in some so act upon the nervous system as to produce the results which the same enthusiasm naturally regarded as the effects of miraculous power. Any candid man must feel that this is sorry trifling; for it must strike such an one, that if it be difficult to explain the events indicated on such a theory, it is absolutely impossible to apply the theory at all to other events recorded in the Gospel as the miracles of Christ. Speaking on this point an honest Freethinker says, "Miracles of this class are not cures which could have been effected by the influence of a striking sanctity acting upon a simple faith. They

The lame efforts of unbelievers to get rid of the miraculous element.

are *prodigies;* they are, as it seems, works which Omnipotence alone could achieve. In the case of these miracles it may be said that the laws of nature are simply suspended. Jesus does not here exhibit merely the power of moral and mental superiority over common men; He upsets and goes beyond the rules and bounds of the universe. A word from His mouth stills a tempest. A few loaves and fishes are fashioned by His Almighty hand into an abundant feast which satisfies thousands of hungry men. At His bidding life returns to inanimate corpses. By His curse a fig tree which had no fruit is withered up.*

The admission of a Freethinker.

The writer of the above passage sees the folly of trying to explain away the recorded miracles of Jesus as if they were no miracles at all; yet he is determined *not to believe them;* accordingly he goes on to argue that the only escape from the difficulty is to apply the sponge, *i. e.*, utterly reject all those stories as groundless legends. Such, we believe, is the *animus* of our Theistic friends in India, they admit the Bible to be a very good Book, some think it the *best of all books*, but they think it needs pruning and the miraculous element is one to which they apply the knife. They admire and laud the character of Jesus; all that the Bible says of his love, wisdom, tenderness, and toil, they believe, for all this, they think, is worthy of belief; His matchless teaching they also receive, so far as it bears upon general topics; but when the Bible tells of His acts of

How he and our Indian Theists dispose of the difficulty.

* Dr. Schenkel on the character of Jesus.

Divine power, and of his claim to such power, they forthwith shake their heads and say, "No, that in our judgment is unlikely to be true, it seems to us unreasonable and therefore we reject it, it is a myth, an interpolation, it cannot be true."

Pray, good Sirs, are you prepared to substantiate what you say? Have you applied the principles of historical criticism to this subject? Have you discovered that the passages you spurn, the utterances of Jesus you reject, are really interpolations? Come now, we challenge you to the proof. But you well know, proof you have none; you have *impressions*, that is all, and on these you ground your policy of *excision*. This is not the time or place for establishing the veracity of the statements you repudiate; we merely say in brief, what we are prepared to prove at large; that the passages you reject rest upon the very same basis as those you accept; the testimony of history, the evidence of ancient manuscripts and versions, all concur in declaring that the one class of passages is as genuine and authentic as the other, and that, consequently, to accept these whilst you reject those, is an instance of childish caprice and unreasoning prejudice.

A challenge.

For ourselves we claim the right to be consistent and to believe what is written as *true* until it is proved to be false.* We find that Jesus really wrought mi-

* It is a remark we have made before, but it is well worth repeating, that it is a singular fact that, whilst people in this *nineteenth* century so facilely pronounce the miracles to be false, people who lived in the *First* century—Yea, people who lived at the very time *when*, and in the very places *where*, the miracles were said to

racles, that He wrought them by His own power, and that He constantly appealed to them as verifications of His claim to the homage and devotion of men. In this respect, therefore, the position of Jesus is *sui generis*, it stands out in bold and incomparable prominence, and stolid indeed must be the mind which is not prompted solemnly to ask—"Who can this Wonder-worker be?"

(2.) If the consideration of the miracles of Jesus suggests His peculiar and exalted rank in the scale of being, the same is indicated by His peerless character and His claim to moral perfection. The faultlessness of Jesus has ever commanded the attention of men. In vain did his foes, in the days of his flesh, watch for his halting, in vain did they track his steps and lay snares for his feet, they could not lay their finger upon a single moral flaw. Under circumstances of trial and provocation and injury such as no other man ever endured, He ever stood erect and self-sustained; He not only appears before us as a good man, but as totally exempt from those frailties which at some turn or other mark the best of men. But *we* need not sing the praises of His holiness, the world is well-nigh agreed that he was

The moral standard of Jesus without a parallel.

be performed, did *not* dispute their reality. Christ's bitterest foes, the Pharisees and Priests, would only have been too glad if they could have made out a case of imposition against Him, but though they watched Him with keenest hate and most searching scrutiny they were compelled despite themselves to admit, "This man doeth many miracles." John XI. 47. Surely the testimony of eye-witnesses, and *such eye-witnesses*, must tell more weightily than the *dictum* of cavillers in the present day.

the holiest of beings, and even those who question His claim to divinity admit Him to be exalted above the highest level of ordinary humanity. But it is not unusual for such persons softly to whisper that, excellent as the character of Jesus was, there might yet be, and probably were, in his history, minor failings and moral slips not recorded.

This remark brings us to the one strange feature in His character which strikes us as insuperable on the Humanitarian theory. We do not now insist upon the positive sinlessness of Christ; the one point to which we direct attention is—*His conciousness that He was sinless.* This could not be the result of his maintaining a low standard of morality, for what could be more exalted than the standard which he ever propounded? All grovelling ideas of comparative worth He repudiated, all notions of ceremonial and external perfection He denounced. Nothing short of absolute perfection came within the standard which He taught. "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. V. 48. To love God with all the powers of the soul, and to love man as oneself, is the golden rule which He laid down for human guidance. Now, in the case of a mere human teacher who enforced such a perfect system of ethics, what should we instinctively expect as an accompaniment of such teaching? Should we not look for some acknowledgment of personal unworthiness thus to teach, some confession of personal errors and short-comings? But what are the facts of the case? Throughout the whole history of Christ we trace

His consciousness told Him He was sinless.

no sign of penitence, no acknowledgment of sin even of a venial character, no admission of error, no correction of a mistake, no confession of personal frailty, not a single prayer for forgiveness. He was ever calling upon men to repent, yet evinced no sign of repentance Himself; He was ever urging men to be like God, but never dropt the faintest hint of any unlikeness to God in Himself. Now, all this is simply inexplicable if we merely place Jesus in the category of good and great men. Who does not know that the man who is the most holy and the most like God is the very man who is the most painfully humbled under the sense of his personal imperfection and sin?* We ask you

He never repented, never sought pardon.

* No fact is more inevitably certain than this. As an old writer has truly expressed it, "The man who grows upwards in holiness grows downwards in humility." The more close and clear the view is which a man obtains of God, the more crushing is the sense of contrast between himself and that Holy Being. The holy angels, though finitely perfect, are abashed in His presence and with covered faces cry, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts!" One of the holiest men who have trod this sinful earth was the patriarch Job; God himself testified that, "There was none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feared God and eschewed evil," Job. I 8. Such indeed was his character when compared with other men; but how did that holy sage speak of himself in the sight of God? He cries, "Behold I am vile; what shall I answer Thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth." Job XLI. 4.; and again, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." Job XLII. 5, 6. In like manner, Isaiah, one of the greatest and most favoured of the prophets, when honored with a vision of the Almighty, exclaimed in deepest self-abasement.

then, good reader, if you are still bent upon regarding Jesus as a mere man, how do you explain this phenomenon? you admit that Jesus was a *holy* man; self-distrust, self-abasement and penitence invariably characterise holy men; but none of these features appear in the character of Jesus; in a word His consciousness was altogether different from the consciousness of that class of mankind to which you relegate Him. It is for *you* to solve this problem. Cannot you see that to do this you are driven to adopt some lame and doubtful hypothesis? Cannot you see moreover that, if for the moment, you admit the orthodox view, there is no difficulty to surmount, no problem to solve? The whole thing is transparent as the light and natural as nature itself. This feature which no amount of torturing can harmonise with the bare idea of his being a holy man is in strict and essential harmony with the supposition of His being the Holy and Eternal Son of God.

In this respect He was unlike all other holy men.

But the evidence in this case is not merely negative; the consciousness of Christ above described, equally appears in His *positive utterances*. He claimed to be sinless. Confronting his virulent foes, He demanded with a claim and unruffled mien, "which of you convinceth me of sin?"* John VIII, 46. But if this appeal to

"Woe is me, for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts." Isaiah VI. 5.

* The Greek term used here for convince is rendered (John XVI. 8) as "reprove," but there can be no doubt the translation in the above passage is more accurate. The word does not mean sim-

man was strangely bold, what shall we say of another statement in which the appeal is to *heaven*? Speaking of His Heavenly Father He fearlessly avers, "*I always do those things that please Him.*" John VIII. 29. Oh! who among the sons of men dare lift his eyes to the heart-searching God and declare that he never at any time transgressed His will? What good man would not shrink with horror from such an audacious utterance? Yet Jesus, in all the calm dignity of His innate consciousness, makes this astounding declaration;—*astounding* we say, but somehow or other, the world has seen nothing shocking or astounding in such an utterance as coming from the mouth of Jesus. Few are the men who would rise up and say it did *not* become Him. Again we ask—What think ye of Christ?

(3.) The last paragraph has given us an instance of what has been called, "*the self-assertion of Christ.*" This is another of those singular features in the Prophet of Nazareth which obstinately refuse to chime in with the Humanitarian theory. Nothing is more common than to hear persons who spurn the notion of Christ's divinity, laud His teaching in rapturous terms; but what can such persons make of those awful notes of majesty with which He speaks? How can they account for His reiterated appropriation of attributes and powers to

The self-assertion of Jesus.

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ply to reprove or to convict, but it generally conveys the idea of convincing a person of something of which he was not conscious before. Viewed in this light, the challenge is an assertion of Christ's inner consciousness of His sinlessness; He says as it were, "Prove to me that I am a sinner, if you can."

which none of the sons of man could lay claim without incurring the charge of blasphemy? "Never man spake like this man," is an acknowledgment which was wrung from His foes, more in reluctant homage than in spite. Who can dispute the truth of their admission?

First of all we would call attention to the unwonted authority which He assumed as a religious Teacher. His mode of imparting instruction was altogether new and unaccountable to the Jews. It is at the close of the sermon on the mount, that marvellous discourse which has commanded the admiration of eighteen centuries that we read, "The people were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." Matt. VII. 28,29. The scribes, like all other merely human instructors, pointed to that which was written as the ground-work of their teaching; Jesus put forth new and unheard-of doctrines and demanded their acceptance as the truths of God; He did not, after the example of the prophets, preface his utterances with the formula, "thus saith the Lord of Hosts." He taught in His own name and with His own authority, hence the note of awful dignity which ever and anon falls on the ear "Verily, Verily, *I say unto you.*"

The authority which He assumed as a Teacher.

But not only did He in this solemn way propound new doctrines, He actually abrogated or modified ordinances which for fourteen centuries had borne the stamp of divine authority. Referring to certain enactments which the Almighty Himself had proclaimed on Sinai's fiery summit, He says, "Ye have heard that

it was said by them of old time."—He then goes on to cite some injunction of the Mosaic Law; after which citation He proceeds, "*But I say unto you* &c."—enunciating a new precept which either entirely subverted the old or presented it in a totally new aspect. See Matt. V. 21, 27, 38, 43. Who can annul, amend, or modify divine statutes but God Himself? Conceive, good Reader, if you can, of the tremendous audacity, the awful profanity of a creature of earth, however great or exalted he might be, presuming to recast and change the law of God! Fancy Moses or David or Paul laying claim to such power. You feel the idea is too preposterous to be for a moment entertained, you are sure, at least, that the man who should advance such a claim would be branded with madness. Yet, notwithstanding His wondrous claims, the world has never branded Jesus with madness; no, there is that about the tone and spirit of the Prophet of Nazareth which is as irreconcileable with the notion of madness as with that of arrogant assumption. The best of the Unitarian writers has felt and acknowledged this in striking terms. Dr. Channing writes, "There is a native tone of grandeur and authority in His teaching, * * * this unlaboured manner of expressing great thoughts is particularly worthy of attention. You never hear from Jesus that swelling, pompous, ostentatious language, which almost necessarily springs from an attempt to sustain a character above our powers."* This witness is true, but,

He abrogated and modified divine precepts.

Dr. Channing's testimony.

* Channing's works II. 55.

if Jesus were a mere man, or indeed the highest of created Intelligences, he assuredly attempted to sustain a character above His powers; such words as he uttered could never befit the mouth of a creature; but, view that august Being Who gave the *new* Law from the Mount of Beatitudes as one and the same with Him who proclaimed the *old* Law from Sinai's top, and all is clear, natural and right.

(4) But if the utterances of Jesus in His first great discourse suggest a strong presumption of His divinity, much more do His subsequent statements. In that wonderful sermon He said but little of Himself; the little which He said rather *implied* than declared His actual nature. The thoughtful student of the New Testament will see that the Saviour henceforward in terms of increasing force and explicitness *Preached Himself*? There is something most impressive and awe-inspiring in the tone of calm dignity with which He asserts His superhuman titles and functions; one instinctively shudders at the thought of such tremendous claims proceeding from the lips of a mortal or even of the highest created Intelligence; the conviction forces itself upon us that none other than God can be the Speaker.

Jesus reveals Himself with increasing explicitness.

The holiest and the highest among human teachers ever point to something *external to themselves* for the amelioration of the darkness, guilt and misery of the world. Their effort ever is to divert the eyes of their fellows from themselves and to fix them upon Him who is the Supreme Good and the Source of all blessing.

He ever proclaimed Himself the Author and Giver of all good things.

Jesus, on the contrary, proclaims Himself as the Author and Giver of all good things; His ceaseless effort is to concentrate the attention of a dark, guilty wretched world upon Himself. His cry is, "*Come unto me* all ye that labour and are heavy-laden."—but why should they come? Does He promise to teach them the way of rest and peace? No; He says, "I will *give* you rest; come unto me and ye shall find rest to your souls." (Matt. XI. 28.) Speaking of the spiritual destitution of the world, the hunger and thirst of the soul, He says, "I am the Bread of life, he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst;" and again, "I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven; if a man eat of this Bread he shall live for ever." John VI. 35, 51. Here again He sets forth Himself alone as the life-giving food of the human soul. Elsewhere, He explains the expression *coming* to Him and *feeding* on Him to mean humble reliance upon and faith in His name—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life." John VI. 47.

He gives eternal life.

Are you startled, good Reader, at this plain intimation that "everlasting life" flows from Jesus? Marvel not; this is *not* the *only* instance of such a claim. In still more explicit terms He avows this attribute, where, speaking of His believing people, He says, "*I give unto them eternal life;* and they shall never perish." John X. 28. Pointing to the moral and spiritual darkness of the world, He does not say that He has come

to reveal the *means* of light, nor yet that, like the Seers of old, He held the commission of heaven as a Light-bearer; again pointing to Himself He says, "I am the Light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John VIII. 12. Has the world lost the right way? He does not like the Prophets cry, "This is the way, walk ye in it," pointing to Himself He cries, "I am *the way*." Has truth well-nigh perished out of the earth? He does not proclaim Himself a mere teacher of truth; His words are, "I am *the Truth*." Has spiritual life been all but extinct? He says, "I am *the life*." John XIV. 6. A lamp may diffuse light and heat; but *the sun is light and heat itself*. Does a sinful man long for re-union with the Eternal Father? Jesus tells him that such union is only possible through the medium of the Eternal Son, "No man can come unto the Father but by me." John XIV. 6. Is it an attribute of Deity to hear and answer prayer? Jesus hears and answers prayer; He says, "If ye shall ask anything in my name *I will do it*." John XIV. 13.

His words of eternal duration.

The prophet Isaiah, as a divine messenger, says, "The word of our God shall stand for ever." Isa. XL. 8. The Lord Jesus, in terms of awful majesty, declares, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but *my* word shall not pass away." Mark XIII. 31. How many of His utterances bring out a sharp line of contrast between Himself and men in general! addressing a group of Jews who stood around Him he says, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above; ye are of this world, I am

not of this world." John VIII. 23. In the parable of the Gospel feast He depicts Himself as the *Royal Prince*, whilst the Jews are the *subjects* of the King, bidden to the supper, Matt. XXII. 1-3. In another parable He contrasts Himself with the prophets of old; they were *servants* sent by the lord of the vineyard to receive the fruits; but *He* is no servant; He is the "*beloved Son*" and the Father is represented as saying, "They will reverence *Him* when they see Him." Luke XX. 9-16. On the same principle we never find Him speaking in any of His discourses of God as the common Father of Himself and others; He never uses the expression, "*Our* Father." He is careful to maintain the distinctness of the relationship, and this He does by the formula, "*my* Father and *your* Father." John XX. 17.

In certain parables He clearly indicates the contrast between His relationship to God and man.

The further we advance the more are we struck with the self-assertion of this wondrous Being, and the more impelled are we to feel that His words are not the words of a man but of God. He taught men to contemplate His offices and work in the distant future. He reveals Himself as the Lord of life and death. At His Almighty word earth's sleeping millions will awake; "All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." John V. 28. He will be the Great Divider and Judge of the risen millions, they shall stand before His throne, and shall be relegated by his righteous sentence, either to the eternal joys of heaven or the endless woes of hell.

He proclaims Himself as the Raiser of the dead and the Judge of all mankind.

(Matt. XXV. 31-46). "The Father judgeth no man," saith Jesus, "but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." John V. 22. "Watch ye therefore," saith He in notes of solemn monition to all mankind, "that ye may be counted worthy to stand before the Son of man." Luke XXI. 36. Are these the utterances of mortal man or of any created being?

View Him again, after His resurrection from the dead, sending forth His chosen followers to found His kingdom in all nations of the earth. Mark the terms of that commission. The Gospel was to be preached to all nations; and, in the case of those who believed, a solemn ordinance of initiation was appointed; by this ordinance they were to be formally constituted members of Christ's mystical Kingdom on earth and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven. "Baptise them," said Jesus, "in the name of the Father, *and of the Son*, and of the Holy Ghost." Matt. XXVIII. 19. Thus Jesus places His name on an equal footing with the names of the Father and of the Holy Ghost; so far as the formula goes the clear implication is that, every baptised person becomes as truly a subject of Jesus as of the Father and the Holy Ghost, and is, therefore, pledged to render equal homage to each Person of the Holy Three Whose names he bears. Do you doubt this inference, good reader? You shall listen then to another utterance of Jesus about which there is no room for doubt as to the degree of homage which He claims; He says that, "All men should honor the Son *even as they honor the Father*; he that honoreth not the Son,

The baptismal formula indicates what?

honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him." John V. 23.

Next, mark His closing—probably his last, declaration on earth. After commissioning His envoys to go forth and proclaim His Kingdom, He says, "And, lo! I am with you always even unto the end of the world." Matt. XXVIII. 20. If this solemn assurance does not involve His omnipresence, what does it mean? The term "*you*" could not be confined to the Apostles addressed, for they would not remain until the end of the world. The word, therefore, pointed to their descendants in all lands up to the end of time, and He promises to be actually present with them "always even unto the end of the world," and this, notwithstanding the fact that He was, as the man Christ Jesus, about to leave them, and in their presence to ascend to the realms of glory.

His closing utterance denotes omnipresence.

But our readers will not fail to notice that this promise indirectly predicted the *duration* of the Kingdom of Christ. It should last until the end of the world; so that, if the promise involved the omnipresence of Christ, it also implied His *Prescience;* He plainly avouched for the fact that, His Church should endure so long as the world should last. But man cannot tell what *one day* may bring forth, much less anticipate the history of centuries. It may fairly be argued that mere human calculation could never have foretold the success and perpetuity of Christ's Kingdom. It was a kingdom totally different in character from

Christ's prescience shewn in His predicting the spread and continuance of His Kingdom.

every other kingdom the world has known. It was a kingdom, moreover, resting on principles not only foreign to man's natural tastes, but utterly *repugnant* to them; humanly speaking, the chances were a thousand to one against its success; could a mere man have foreseen that success; or, if he did not foresee it, have ventured to predict it? Jesus however (not in this passage only but in many others) fearlessly foretels the spread and continuance of His Kingdom. The event has justified the prediction. His Kingdom still lasts and still increases. The bare fact of the existence and success of Christ's Kingdom has suggested to many thoughtful minds one of the strongest presumptive evidences of the superhuman nature of its Founder. We cannot here resist the temptation of quoting at length the testimony of Napoleon Bounaparte on this subject. That mighty conqueror, when a captive at St. Helena, found time for sober thought and reflection on subjects which he had well-nigh ignored in busier days. On one occasion he put the question to a party of friends, "Who was Jesus Christ?" No answer being given he proceeded, "Well then, I will tell you. Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and I myself have founded great empires; but upon what did these creations of our genius depend? Upon *force*. Jesus alone founded His empire on *love*; and to this very day millions would die for Him. I think I can understand something of human nature; and I tell you, all these were *men*, and I am a man; none else is like Him;

How Napoleon Bounaparte reasoned on this subject.

Jesus Christ was more than man, . . . I have inspired multitudes

with such an enthusiastic devotion that they would have died for me, but to do this it was necessary that I should be *visibly* present with the electric influence of my looks, of my words, of my voice. When I saw men and spoke to them I lighted up the flame of self-devotion in their hearts . . . Christ alone has succeeded in so raising the mind of man towards the Unseen that it becomes insensible to the barriers of time and space. Across a chasm of eighteen hundred years, Jesus Christ makes a demand which is, beyond all others, difficult to satisfy; He asks for what a philosopher may often seek in vain at the hands of his friends, or a father of his children, or a bride of a spouse, or a man of his brother. He asks for the human *heart;* He will have it entirely to Himself; He demands it unconditionally; and forthwith His demand is granted. Wonderful! In defiance of time and space, the soul of man with all its faculties becomes an annexation to the empire of Christ. All that sincerely believe in Him experience that remarkable supernatural love towards Him. This phenomenon is unaccountable, it is altogether beyond the scope of man's creative powers. Time—the great destroyer—is powerless to extinguish this sacred flame; time can neither exhaust its strength nor put a limit to its range. This is it which strikes me most; I have often thought of it. This is it which proves to me quite convincingly the divinity of Jesus Christ."

The last feature touched upon in the above remarkable passage is worthy of special note. When one listens to the imperious, all-embracing demands which Jesus makes upon man's devotion, we are driven to the

conclusion that, if He were neither a mad man nor an impostor, He must have been Divine. His claims actually take in the whole man—body, soul and spirit. There must be a total surrender of faculties, affections, possessions ; a renouncing of all that is held dear and precious for His sake. His peremptory injunction to all is, "Follow me." Love to Him must eclipse the love which we hold to the dearest ties of kindred ; "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." Matt. X. 37. Yea,

The all embracing claims of Christ upon man's devotion.

His demands rise to a greater height still, He says, "If a man come to me and *hate* not his father, and mother, and wife and children and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Luke XIV. 26. Thus He pointedly lays down the rule that the love of man's soul to Christ shall so far exceed the love which he bears to his kindred that, in the strong light of contrast, the latter shall appear as it were no love at all.* The whole drift of His teaching shews that He would allow no rival claim, no divided interests; He will be Lord Paramount over man's affections; nothing must step in between Him and the

* The history of Jacob's feeling towards his two wives, Leah and Rachel, furnishes an apt illustration of the use of the words "love" and "hatred" in this relative or comparative sense. We read, for instance, Gen. XXIX. 31, that Leah was *hated* by Jacob ; in what sense she was hated is made quite clear by the preceding verse, where we are told that "Jacob loved Rachel *more than Leah.*"

human soul. Mark again, the tremendous consequences which he annexes to the rejection of His message as spoken by His ambassadors. The fearful penalty inflicted shall overpass the curse of the Almighty on the guilty cities of the plain. "It shall be," says He, "more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city." Matt. X. 15. Thus, He clearly makes eternal weal or woe to depend upon man's acceptance or rejection of His claims; and the acceptance of those claims involved nothing less than the consecration of the entire man to His service.

Now, what possible answer can be made to all this? Suppose Jesus to be a mere man like ourselves, or suppose him, if you like, to be the most exalted of all created beings, still, if he were but a *creature*, would not such claims in his mouth be monstrously absurd and daringly impious? None but the God in Whom we live and move and have our being can put forth such claims to man's devotion. It is His injunction that man shall love and serve Him "with all his heart, soul and strength;" and *this is the measure of devotion Jesus claims; Who then is Jesus?*

(5.) Another important feature in the teaching of Christ is His reiterated allusion to His *pre-existence*. Whatever men may make of this fact, and however they may try to avoid its incidence, it still remains a fact that Jesus represented Himself as having existed ages before His birth in a state of glory with God the Father. When he does not put this forth as a direct statement, He indicates it as an assumed fact and the idea per-

Christ taught the fact of His pre-existence.

meates His whole teaching. Take the following passages in illustration; "I am not of this world." "I know whence I came and whither I go." John VIII. 14. "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before." John VI. 62. On other occasions He propounds the fact with dogmatic precision to the faith of His hearers. It is true many of His hearers did not and would not believe the fact; they said, "Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?" John VI. 42. But their rejection of His teaching in this respect did not make Him less positive and explicit in His statements. He boldly avers, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above," John VIII. 14. "I came down from heaven," John VI. 38. "I came forth from the Father and am come into the world; again, I leave the world and go to the Father." John XVI. 28. "I know Him and I am from Him." John VII. 29. "Before Abraham was I am." John VIII. 58. And how touchingly solemn is that petition to the Father the night before He suffered! "And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." John XVII. 5. Perhaps the most pregnant and suggestive utterance of all is that addressed by the Saviour to Nicodemus; it gives a glimpse of something more than pre-existence. "No man," says Jesus, "hath ascended up to heaven but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man *which is in heaven*." John III. 13. This utterance not only certifies the fact that Jesus was a

His striking declaration to Nicodemus.

denizen of heaven before He visited our earth, but that although in bodily shape he appeared to Nicodemus as an inhabitant of the world, he was still in some other sense a dweller in heaven also. He does not say, "The Son of man which *was* in heaven," but, "The Son of man which *is* in heaven," thus clearly denoting that at the very time when, as a man, he was going to and fro among men, He was actually abiding in heaven. He says, "He came down from heaven," and yet that He was *in* heaven, that He left that holy place and yet was dwelling therein. Here, then, is a plain declaration of His being at the same time in more places than one. Can our Humanitarian readers explain the enigma?

Do you think then, dear Reader, that the Humanitarian theory really solves that query, "Who and what is Christ?" Does it satisfactorily fix His place in the scale of being? I trow not. If you think it *does*, then listen to another weighty utterance of Jesus; He says, "No man knoweth Who the Son is but the Father; and Who the Father is but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him." Luke X. 22. This passage is well worthy of deep and serious thought; it effectually silences those who, like the unbelieving Jews of old, say, "As for this man we know who and whence he is." Jesus says, "No, you do *not* know me; there is something about my personality and being which utterly transcends the power of human comprehension, and transcends it in a similar way to that in which the personality and being of the Eternal Father transcend it; in truth, we are each similarly incomprehensible

to unassisted human faculties. We know each other well enough, but, without a special revelation man cannot know us." There is truth in the old adage, "None but God can know God."

More 'direct' proofs of Christ's divinity.

II. We now advance a step further. We can quite understand that, the perusal of the foregoing considerations may have awakened in the minds of some of our readers an almost painful desire for evidence of an absolute and conclusive character. To such then it is not only a natural transition, but an actual relief, to pass on to those more positive and explicit declarations which Jesus makes of His Deity.

Peter's and Nathaniel's confession.

In the first place, we would recall to the reader's memory two or three points already dwelt upon. We have seen that when Peter in the name of his brother disciples avowed "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," (Matt. XVI. 16.) Jesus endorsed the avowal as a heaven-taught lesson. Similarly when Nathaniel declared, "Thou art the Son of God," (John I. 49.) He shewed his full acquiescence in that confession. We have noted, moreover, how utterly untenable, in the light of Christ's words, is the supposition that He only claimed to be a son of God in the ordinary sense in which all men are such; for, in that case, He never could have assured Peter that the truth he had avowed could only be known by divine revelation.

But there is an important feature in the enquiry of Jesus which we have not yet noticed. Jesus asked, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?"

Now two things are plainly involved in these words; First, Jesus avowed Himself to be tho *Son of man;* He claimed this as his rightful title about which there must be no dispute. In the next place, He desired his disciples to say what men in general and they in particular took Him, the Son of man, to be; the point of the question clearly was, what am I besides the Son of man? We see that Jesus all through His history claimed this title; on ordinary and extraordinary occasions He used it. It related to His work when on earth, for He, "the Son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke XIX. 10. It pointed moreover to His work in the *future;* in His prophecy over Jerusalem, He says, "They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds with power and great glory." Matt. 24. 30. So, when standing at the tribunal of Caiaphas He assured His Judges, "Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven." Matt. XXVI. 64.

Christ avowed Himself to be the Son of man, and asked what He was besides that.

Now what was involved in Christ's assumption of this title? To what did he manifestly refer? And what idea must have been suggested by its use to Jewish hearers? There is no room for doubt that the use of this title constituted a decided assertion of His Messiahship. Ever since the prophet Daniel related his wondrous vision of the kingdoms, was the term "Son of man" adopted by the Jews as a leading title of the coming Messiah. Daniel writes,

By claiming this title He claims the Messiahship and points back to Daniel's vision.

"One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven.....and there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve Him; His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Dan. VII. 13, 14. Henceforward every devout Jew fixed his eye on this august description of the power and glory of the Messiah, and knew that he would be called "the Son of man." An uninspired book, called the Book of Enoch, was published among the Jews there is every reason to believe in the second century before the birth of Christ; it is still extant, and it contains repeated allusions to the coming Messiah under this title. Conscious then of the prevailing impression and pointing back to the glorious prediction on which it was founded, He ever proclaimed Himself to be the "Son of man." The reader has only to compare the words of Christ in two of the passages above quoted with the prophecy of Daniel to see that Jesus actually cites the very words of the prophet. Daniel says, "One like the Son of man came in the clouds of heaven." Jesus declared to the Jewish Council, "Ye shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven." Nor can we forget how, again, in His references to His kingdom, a spiritual kingdom, "a kingdom not of this world," He indicates that kingdom so gloriously depicted by the same holy Seer. Thus did Jesus, by claiming the Messianic title, also lay claim to the glories attached to it. He asserted, in short, that

Jesus quotes the very words of Daniel.

He was that wondrous Being whom "all people, nations and languages should serve," that He was the Holder of "everlasting dominion," and that *His* was the Kingdom "which could not pass away; which could not be destroyed."

What the title in itself denoted.

The expression "Son of man" as used by the prophet and adopted by Jesus had a clear reference to His alliance with humanity, it pointed to Him as the archetypal man, the representative, the ideal, the pattern man. But, manifestly, the title as applied to the Messiah meant something very much more than this. The prerogatives of the Son of man in Daniel were not human, they were divine prerogatives; just as are the prerogatives asserted or implied by Jesus in the preceding pages. Hence the title "Son of man" while expressly asserting the Humanity really involves the *Divinity* of Christ. In order to elicit this further acknowledgement Jesus put His memorable query thus, "Whom do men say, that I the Son of man am?" As though He would say "As the Son of man, I am all that Daniel describes, but Who and What must He be who is thus described?" Peter at once, as the mouth-piece of the rest unhesitatingly avows, "Thou art the Christ, the *Son of the living God*," thus declaring that the true *divinity* as well as true *humanity* inhered in Him who was the Son of man. "Blessed art thou!" said Jesus, "flesh and blood hath not revealed this to thee but my Father which is in heaven." He admits the

What more it involves.

It points to the God-man.

avowal and endorses the doctrine that He is the God-man.

Should any one yet doubt whether all this is involved or not in the passage before us, we would ask him to turn to the record of Christ's trial. We read, "The high priest said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ the Son of God." To this solemn appeal Jesus replied, "Thou hast said; nevertheless I say unto you, hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven." Matt. XXVI. 63, 64. To Jewish ears this answer was a full and decisive assertion of His *divine* as well as human character; there was no room for doubt on the matter; hence we read, "Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, he hath spoken blasphemy, what further need have we of witnesses, behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy; what think ye? They answered and said, he is guilty of death." Matt. XXVI. 65,66.

This view confirmed by the record of Christ's trial.

Our readers should ever bear in mind in connection with the titles assumed by Jesus, that the real question is, not what this or that man now-a-days may say as to the meaning of those titles, but *what sense the Jews in our Lord's day attached to them.* There can be no doubt whatever that they understood those titles as involving a claim to deity; they understood that Jesus by using these titles claimed to be divine. A specific charge which they urged against Him was, "Thou being a man makest thyself God."

The real question is, the sense attached by the Jews to those titles.

John X. 33. In the sense in which they understood those terms in the same sense did He use them; instead of repudiating their inference He endorsed and confirmed it, and, as we have said already, laid down His life in attestation thereof, when, by correcting their impression, He might have saved Himself. What does all this prove if it does not prove that He claimed to be divine?

But not only did Jesus by the use of certain titles teach the lesson of His divinity, He did this, again and again, by asserting His oneness in being, in essence, in power with the Father. A very remarkable instance meets us in John V, in which He puts His will and power on a level with the will and power of the Father. He had wrought a wondrous miracle at the Pool of Bethesda; He had, by a word, healed the man who had been diseased for 38 years. The miracle had been witnessed by many of the enemies of Jesus; its reality was too patent for them to question or deny; but there was (so they thought) one vulnerable point in the transaction; "He had done this thing on the Sabbath day." No devout Jew would work on the Sabbath; *He had done so*, accordingly they taxed Him with breaking the Sabbath. Now, mark the pregnant and weighty reply of Jesus; had He been what many regarded Him, a mere messenger of God, empowered by Him to perform certain works of mercy, the answer which would naturally and necessarily have come from His lips would have been an assertion of this fact; He would

The miracle at the pool of Bethesda.

His answer asserts His oneness with the Father in superiority to the Sabbath and in continuity of working.

have repelled the charge of Sabbath violation by pointing to His divine commission; but the answer which He gave defended His action on totally different grounds; He said, "*my Father worketh hitherto and I work.*" John V. 17. He says in fact, "You imagine that the law of the Sabbath binds me as it binds man, and that consequently I should desist from working on that holy day; but, how is it with my Father? Does *He* stay His hand on the Sabbath? He rested from the work of *creation* on the Sabbath truly, and appointed that day for *man's* observation; but *He* never rests one moment in the work of upholding, sustaining and carrying on the constitution of nature; He ceaselessly works through the Sabbath as through other days, "my Father worketh hitherto *and I work.*" What was this but a re-assertion of what He elsewhere in terms avowed, "the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath day?" Luke VI. 5. What was this, further, but a clear enunciation of His oneness with the Father? The whole force of the Jewish charge rested on the assumption that He was a *mere man*, He met the charge and completely robbed it of its force by placing Himself on a common platform with the eternal Father.* The Jews perfectly

* The more these words are weighed the more clearly does this feature present itself. Not only does Jesus claim, in common with the Father, superiority to Sabbatical obligations, and the right of free and continuous operation, He unequivocally implies equality with the Father in *operative energy*. To what works does His statement relate? To the miraculous work of healing at the Pool of Bethesda; in reference to that display of supernatural

understood the drift of Christ's reply; hence we read, "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his own Father, making himself equal with God." John V. 18.

Further on in the same chapter, in speaking of the love of the Father to Him, the Divine Son, He uses these striking words, "For the Father judgeth no man but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." We have seen before that Jesus pointed to Himself as the future Judge of all mankind; here we learn further, that He will be the *sole* Judge of the world. Though the *right* to judge was inherent in the Father, yet, so to speak, the Father has surrendered that right in favor of the Son; the Father will judge no man, the whole power of judgment is vested in the hand of the Son.* But what

Jesus claims equal honor with the Father.

power He says, "*I* work" not mark you that, "the Father works through me, or I work as His agent," but *I* work *i. e.*, "I work miracles by the exercise of divine power, analogous to that which is exercised by the Father in sustaining the course of nature."

* God, we may rest assured, does nothing without a reason, there was a reason—a very striking and impressive reason for the Father thus leaving in the Son's hand the whole work of judging. We are told in verse 27 that the whole power of judgment was committed to Him "Because He is the Son of man." We thus see that it was on account of His Messianic character that the Father thus honored Him. By virtue of His becoming man to save man, He obtained also the right to *judge* man. Twice did the Father declare by a voice from heaven, "This is my beloved Son." The Father was well pleased in all that He, as the Son of man, did and suffered, and in token of His approval decreed that He (Jesus) should, in the very character which He had assumed, sit as the supreme Judge of all at the last.

was the grand aim and design of the Father in thus glorifying the Son?—Mark what follows, "That all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father." John V. 23. Thus, Jesus unhesitatingly claims at the hands of men the very same honor which men render to the Father, and declares it to be the will of the Father that He should thus be honored. Whatever form the honor paid to the Father may take—worship, adoration, prostration of soul, devotion of the affections, surrender of the will—whatever it may be, Jesus claims the very same as His inalienable right. One's blood runs cold, and trembling seizeth one at the bare idea of a mortal man or of any created being, putting forth such a claim; what daring wickedness or what raving madness must such a claim imply! Yet, in calm dignity and awful majesty Jesus makes this claim; would you, dear reader, call Him wicked? Would you pronounce Him mad? *

The last passage shews us that Jesus claims equal honor with the Father; another of His utterances shews with what good reason this claim is advanced.

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* It is not an uncommon thing for those who wish to avoid the force of this utterance of Jesus to suggest that, the honor of which He speaks is, as regards Himself only *relative*, *i. e.*, He is honored as the Ambassador of the King of heaven and as His delegated Judge. This suggestion has only to be placed side by side with the words of Jesus to be signally refuted. An Ambassador is honored *as such*, but who ever heard of an Ambassador claiming equal honor with his Sovereign? If the honor to be paid to the Son were merely *relative*, then men should *not* honor Him even *as* they honor the Father; the honor in this case and in that would be totally distinct and different in principle.

In the passage to which we refer Jesus is speaking of the Divine Spirit whom He will send to abide with His Church.* He says, "He shall glorify me, for He shall receive of mine and shall shew it unto you." John XVI. 14. The blessed Spirit should therefore glorify Christ by revealing His character and attributes. But, some one might ask, what character and what attributes will the Spirit reveal? Jesus anticipates such a query and solves it by the striking statement—"All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that He shall take of mine and shall shew it unto you." John XVI. 15. Now, all we ask is, that these words shall be taken in their plain and natural sense; take them in that sense and they undeniably affirm that, whatever the Father possesses that also the Son possesses; whatever of glory, honor, power, majesty and eternity, pertains to the Father, that also pertains to the Son; whatever is the Father's right that also is the right of the Son; the expression is *universal and unlimited;* the Son does not possess this thing and that like the Father, but Jesus says, "*All things* that the Father hath are mine;" mark too, these words are unaccompanied by a sentence or a single word of a qualifying character. Unbelievers may try to soften their force and explain away their import, but they do

Jesus claims equality with the Father in point of possession.

* The reader will not fail to notice in passing that Jesus actually says, "*I will send Him unto you.*" Thus he would send the Spirit—the Holy Spirit of God, as His messenger and witness. Can you conceive, dear Reader, of the highest Archangel, much less a mortal man, using such language? What! A creature send the Divine Spirit as his Agent!

this at their peril; Jesus has left that solemn declaration in all its naked dignity to teach men the weighty truth that "such as the Father is, such also is the Son."

From a passage of this description the transition is easy and natural to another, in which the Saviour distinctly asserts His *oneness in essence with the Father.*

Jesus asserts his oneness in essence with the Father.

He was standing in Solomon's porch surrounded by a host of captious Jews. With more of impertinence than actual desire for information, they desired him to tell them plainly whether He were the Christ (Messiah) or not. His reply was, "I have told you and ye believed not." He reminds them of the wondrous miracles which He had wrought in attestation of His Messiahship; but, neither His words nor His wonderful works had been able to produce conviction in their minds; they were bent upon *not* believing, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." But Jesus points to the fact that the evidence which had failed to influence them had wrought its effect upon humble, docile and ingenuous minds, "*My sheep hear my voice.*" Yes, there were those who thoroughly believed in His claims; and He shews their recompense. What is it? O Reader, solemnly weigh this utterance.—"And *I give unto them eternal life.*" In Whose hands are the issues of life? Why, the meanest form of *life-giving* is utterly beyond the ability of man or of all men combined, they could not bestow life on an insect which would flutter for a *second* and then die; Who then is this that, in

He bestows eternal life.

tones of awful majesty, says of believing men, "I give unto them *eternal life* ?"

But Jesus goes on to shew how it is that this life would be eternal and indestructible ; the reason was, that the recipients of this life would be eternally upheld by the Divine Hand ; Jesus would hold them in *His hand ;* the Father would hold them in *His ;* thus their security must be ensured ; for, in truth, the *two* Hands were virtually *one ;* in other words, the love and power of the Father and the love and power of the Son were the same—"*I and my Father are one.*" John X. 30. All the efforts of unbelievers to explain away these words as indicating a *lower* unity, a mere unity of motive and design, must utterly fail ; read in the light of the context this utterance can be nothing less than an assertion of essential and *dynamic* unity between the Father and the Son.

As it has been well said, "What the Arians cannot grasp that the Jews understood." They were at no loss to perceive the kind of unity indicated by Christ ; they took him to mean, in fact, what we have shown He *must* have meant ; accordingly we read, "They took up stones to stone Him," and they said, "For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy, and because that Thou, being a man, makest thyself God." Yea, even so, He had made Himself God, and, if their premisses had been correct, their conclusion would have been incontrovertible ; had He been a mere man, such a claim would have been blasphemy of the worst description. Did Jesus then retract ? Did He allay

The Jews well understood His meaning.

their wrath by telling them they had misunderstood Him? He did *not*; instead of that, He went on logically to reassert the same thing. He employed an illustration with which every Jew was familiar; He reminded them of the fact that, under the Law, the anointed Rulers in Israel, as types of the Messiah, "the Lords Anointed," the true Prophet, Priest and King—sometimes bore the title of "God." He quoted Psalm LXXXII. 6. in illustration. This title they bore, not in their own right, but *ex officio*, by virtue of their office and position as types of Christ. Thus we read, "Jehovah said unto Moses, see, I have made thee a God unto Pharoah." Exod. VII. 1. In standing between a sinful man and a holy God, Moses prefigured Him Who should be the Great Mediator. Moses himself knew full well that he stood in this typical relation to Christ; hence we find him predicting the great Antitype in these words, "A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise upon you *like unto me*." Deut. XVIII. 15.

Instead of retracting He went on logically to reassert the same thing.

The object of Jesus in falling back upon this illustration is sufficiently apparent. He recedes, as it were, to common ground—to a position in which both He and His adversaries would be agreed, and, thereupon founds an argument which would logically compel them, if sincere and candid, to yield the point which they had disputed. His argument is *from the less to the greater*. He says, pointing back to the human types of Himself, "If He called them Gods . . . say ye of Him Whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou

Why Christ adopted this illustration.

blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?" John X. 35, 36. Could reasoning be more cogent and convincing? If there are reflected suns in the bosom of a lake there must be a real sun in the firmament. If the human types of the Messiah were Gods *ex officio*, the Messiah Himself must be God *de jure*, and if the Jews admitted the *relative* right of their magistrates, although mere creatures of earth, to bear that title, how could they question the *absolute* right of Christ to bear it—that Christ Who had come direct from the bosom of the eternal Father into the world? well might He call upon them, in the light of such reasoning, to make good their charge of blasphemy. They made no attempt to do this; they were silenced, but not convinced—so hard were their hearts, so blind their understanding! He, however, is determined to leave no excuse for their unbelief. Accordingly we find His closing utterance is a reiteration in another form of the very same declaration as at first evoked their rage; He says, "*The Father is in me, and I in Him.*" The Jews again understood the claim involved, hence, we read, "Therefore they sought again to take Him." He had told them the plain truth; they understood it but spurned it from them. He said no more; He left them with all the guilt of wilful unbelief resting on their heads. God grant that like guilt may not rest on the heads of any of our readers!

He argues from the less to the greater.

He ends by making the same assertion in another form.

Among the passages previously adduced, in which Jesus asserts His pre-existence, is one of such profound

and solemn import that we must invite special attention to it in this place. The mere fact of Christ's pre-existence does not necessarily and of itself prove His Deity: this feature was, therefore, discussed under the head of the *indirect* and *subsidiary* proofs of His Godhead.

A pregnant passage reproduced.

The passage, however, to which we refer goes much beyond the bare fact of pre-existence. It is one of those awfully pregnant utterances of Jesus on which, as it has been well said, "He gives a sudden flash of revelation out of the depths of His own eternal consciousness." He is again surrounded by His virulent foes, who are eagerly watching for some ground of accusation against Him; the conversation turns upon Abraham, and Jesus astonishes and offends them by the declaration, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad." John VIII. 56. They chose to understand these words as implying that Christ had actually been contemporary with Abraham; but, how, they reasoned, could this be? "Thou art not yet fifty years old and hast thou seen Abraham?" (v. 57.) Hereupon Jesus gives expression to that tremendous enunciation, "*Before Abraham was I am.*" (v. 58.) They ridiculed the idea of His having lived at the same time with Abraham, for they conceded Him no other existence than that which, like other men, He obtained at His birth; Jesus answers, that He not only existed *with* but *before* Abraham.

But His words present a mighty contrast between the *nature of His existence* and that of Abraham. The

He discloses a vast difference between His existence and that of Abraham.

word which Jesus uses with reference to Abraham's existence (γενέσθαι) points to the fact that his existence commenced from some given point of time, so that there was a period when he was not; but how does he define His own existence? had His existence been *finite* like that of every created being, He would have marked His priority of origin in respect of Abraham by a corresponding term; His words would have been "Before Abraham was I *was or became.*" Both the state of the case and the laws of human language would have necessitated this reply. But the answer which He gave told of simple existence with no indication of beginning or end. "Before Abraham was *I AM.*" In this way He unveils a consciousness of eternal Being. Created beings have three tenses; past, present, and future; the eternal Creator can have but *one*; to Him Who dwells within the circle of Eternity, Whose existence knows neither beginning nor end, all things, all times, all events are *present.* All the measurements of time which pertain to the life of creatures are utterly inapplicable to Him; men in speaking of His being can only with propriety say, "He *is*; He exists," *not* "He was, He became." So, if God condescend to describe His own ineffable being, the most fitting form which human language admits of is—"*I am.*" And we beg you, good reader, to note that this is the very formula by which the Almighty made Himself known to Moses and to Israel of old. "God said unto Moses, *I AM THAT I AM*; and He said, thus

He is the great 'I AM.'

shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, *I AM* hath sent me unto you." Exod. III. 14. There you have the Almighty God fixing His incommunicable title at the same time that He indicates His eternal being; what then is the solemn utterance of Jesus but the re-echo of that awe-inspiring sound which fell on the ear of Moses fourteen centuries before? Yea, it was even so. He who proclaimed Himself the "*I AM*" from the burning bush on mount Horeb is the very same as so pronounced Himself when standing in human form on the plains of Palestine. Nothing more clearly shews that this is the *true sense* of the words than the violent expedients to which Humanitarians have been driven in order to evade it.*

Once more we see the Jews understood the actual drift of Christ's declaration; they comprehended the claim which it involved, and with characteristic virulence and spleen, "then took they up stones to cast at Him." John VIII. 59. Did He then, on this occasion,

* This is not a solitary instance in which Jesus uses this divine formula. Again and again it falls on the ear of the attentive student of the New Testament. Looking forward to all future time He promises His presence in the assemblies of His people; but He does *not* say, "I will be"—but "there *I AM* in the midst of them." Matt. XVIII. 20. When, at His ascension, He withdrew His *human* presence from them, He assured them that His *divine* Presence would attend His followers to the end of time. But how does He express it? Again the divine *I AM* meets us. "Lo, *I AM* with you always even to the end of the world." Matt. XXVIII. 20. So again, speaking of His triumph over death, He adds, "And behold, *I AM* alive for evermore." Rev. I. 18. Had He spoken after the manner of man and as a man, in all those cases the future tense would have been used. But he speaks as the Eternal God, not as mortal man.

modify His words or tell them they had mistaken His meaning? No, He simply retired from their midst.

We must now ask the reader to attend us to that "upper room" in which Jesus, on the night preceding His death, delivered His farewell charge to the chosen Twelve. He had assured them that He was about to return to His Father's House, and that in that House He would prepare a place for them, after which He would return and receive them to Himself to abide with Him for ever. In answer to a remark by Thomas, He went on to speak of Himself as the only Medium of access to the Father and adds, "If ye had known me ye should have known my Father also." He evidently aims at giving them a fuller and clearer view of His relation to the father than they possessed. Philip, apparently eager for the information which Jesus was prepared to give, says, "Lord, shew us the Father and it sufficeth us." Philip's request shewed culpable ignorance as well as earnestness; considering all that he had heard from the lips of Jesus, he ought to have known better than to ask for a revelation of the Father as distinct and separate from the Eternal Son, "the express image of His person," and the great Revealer of the Deity in all dispensations. In tones of gentle but faithful admonition the Saviour replies, "Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? *he that hath seen me hath seen the Father!* how sayest thou then, shew us the Father!" John XIV. 9.

Sundry utterances in the upper room on the night before His death.

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

Ponder these words, good reader, turn them up and down, in and out; gaze upon them in any aspect you like and then say whether they can with consistency and common sense be made to harmonise with the Humanitarian theory. Can you conceive of Peter or Paul, can you conceive of Gabriel or Michael, pointing to himself and saying, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father?" After all the torturing and twisting of unbelievers, these words stand like an immovable rock, on which the Deity of the Speaker is engraved in indelible terms. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." What is this but a reiteration of, and a comment upon, the utterances already adduced, "I and my Father are one."

To see Christ is to see the Father.

Yet Jesus, though thus plainly ennunciating His *mysterious oneness* with the Father, carefully guards them against inferring absolute identity of Person, for He immediately adds, "I am in the Father and the Father in me."

Christ guarded them against inferring His identity of Person with the Father.

It is a singular fact, as in an earlier portion of this work we have shewn, that the very plainness with which Jesus insists upon His oneness with the Father gave birth to an ancient heresy which denied a distinction of Person between the Father and Son. Sabellianism was an exaggeration of the great truth of Christ's union with the Father; but, had the words of Christ, *as a whole*, been studied, that heresy and many others could never have existed.

In a later stage of the same address from which

we have taken the above words other words equally weighty and expressive meet us. Jesus says, "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and *we will come unto him and make our abode with him.*" John XIV. 23. Again we ask what can this language mean? Who is the Speaker Who, associating Himself with the Almighty Father, promises to come and dwell in the soul of man? Who is this Who hesitates not to speak of Himself in conjunction with the Eternal One as "We" and "Our," and represents His presence with men as a co-ordinate blessing with the presence of the Father? "*We* will come unto him and make *our* abode with him."

"We" and "Our"—Who uses these terms?

Nothing to our mind is more striking than the way in which the various utterances of Jesus in reference to His august being, illustrate each other; one seems to supplement another, and strikes at the root of one or other error which a partial view of those utterances has given rise to. For instance, in connection with those passages in which Jesus speaks of His dwelling in the Father and the Father in Him, Humanitarians say, "Of course he means a spiritual communion with the Father, such as all godly souls enjoy; in this way and in no other He is in the Father and the Father in him." Let such persons try how their theory will fit in with the text now before us. It is a blessed truth that spiritual communion exists between God and the souls of holy men; but who does not know that the soul which is thus favored with the divine presence is most

The Humanitarian exposition uprooted.

conscious of the tremendous, the immeasurable contrast between itself and the Divine In-dweller? Could the language of social equality "We" and "Our" ever escape the lips of such a holy soul? And, above all, could that soul, enriched with the Divine Presence itself, ever presume to associate itself with God, and promise, in company with God and as one with God, to enter the souls of those that love Him, and therein abide together with God, to bless, sanctify, and succour them? Really, one stands aghast at the thought of language like this proceeding out of the mouth of any being other than the Almighty God Himself; but again we say, it is *God* and not man that speaks; and as we dwell upon this august and solemn utterance; as we listen to the "We" and "Our" and the combined indwelling of Father and Son in the renewed soul, we seem to catch the echo of awful words spoken many centuries before; the "We" and "Our" and "Us" which again and again strike the ear in the Old Testament, have their refrain in this breathing of Jesus, "*We* will come unto him and make *Our* abode with him." * O Thou Holy One of God, grant us to realise in our hearts what we never can understand in our heads, all that is involved in this wondrous indwelling!

* See Gen I. 26 and III. 26 and XI. 4. Isa VI. 8. No doubt those terms in the Old Testament involve the blessed and holy Trinity, and, therefore, include the Holy Ghost as well as the Father and the Son; but this is equally true of the "We" and "Our" of Christ; the mysterious in-dwelling of the Father and the Son is effected through the agency of the Blessed Spirit.

CHAPTER VI.

What the Old and New Testaments in unison say of Christ.

The Scripture proofs of Christ's Divinity hitherto adduced have necessarily been taken from the New Testament; all the notice we have taken of the Old Testament has been in the way of a passing allusion to some text bearing a special affinity to the passage under discussion. We must not however forget, nor would we have our readers forget, that, though there are *two* Testaments, there is but one Bible; and in a discussion of so solemn and weighty a nature as that in which we are engaged, it is all important to be borne in mind that the Holy Book of God is, from Genesis to Revelation, one complete and continuous revelation of God's will and God's truth; an unbroken unity and a perfect harmony exist between the two portions of the sacred Book; divorce them, and the light of each is dimmed; combine them, and you have the pure light of heaven shining more and more to the perfect day. The light which pervades the two is *one*, and the *Source* of that light is *One*, it is God Who speaks in the Old, it is God Who speaks in the New Testament; but as in nature the same Sun gives differing degrees of the same light, so is in the volume of Revelation, you have the *dawn* of heaven's light in Genesis, and, as the day of varying dispensations advances, you note a steadily *increasing radiance*,

Though there are two Testaments there is but 'one Bible.'

until at length, in the pages of the New Testament, the *meridian* brightness cheers our eyes and strengthens our hearts.

We know of no more profitable employment for the student of the Bible than to trace out the links of connection which bind the two Testaments together; to see how one illustrates the other, and how the light of one is reflected in the mirror of the other.

This is especially edifying in relation to our present enquiry. We are convinced that, the more closely and earnestly a man searches the Old Testament with the light of the *New* falling upon it, the more will he come to feel that *the Lord Jesus Christ is its pervading Topic;*

Jesus Christ the grand pervading topic of the Old Testament.

He shines forth as the central object of all dispensations; types and ceremonies all pointed to Him; He was the burden of prophetic song "The testimony of Jesus was the spirit of prophecy." He was the Hope of godly souls in all ages, in all climes; He was "The Desire of all nations." As in mountainous districts distant sounds awake responsive echoes from rocks and caverns all around, so do deep and solemn utterances of the Old Testament leap over the chasm of centuries and find a clear and distinct response in the pages of the New. Let us listen awhile to those charming sounds and see if what they tell us of Jesus agrees with what He has told us of Himself.

The first point to which we turn our attention relates to those special manifestations of the Deity which are recorded in the Old Testament. In connection with these a difficulty and an apparent contradiction

meet us. On the one hand, God Himself distinctly tells us that he has not been seen and never can be seen by living man; His words to Moses are, "Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me and live." Exod. XXXIII. 20. But, on the other hand, we are as distinctly informed that God *has been seen* again and again by man. It is plainly stated that God appeared to the patriarchs and other holy men of old. Jacob said in reference to the wondrous vision vouchsafed to him, "I have seen God face to face and my life is preserved." Gen. XXXII. 30. Of the visions granted to Moses it is said, "The Lord spake face to face with Moses as a man speaketh with his friend." Exod. XXXIII. 11. The father of Samson, evidently indicating the solemn declaration of the Almighty above quoted, said, "We shall surely die, because we have seen God." Judges XIII. 22. The prophet Isaiah in describing a glorious vision of the Almighty says, "Mine eyes have seen the King the Lord of Hosts." Isa. VI. 5.

The Divine manifestations of the Old Testament an apparent contradiction.

How then are these clashing notes to be harmonised? How is this difficulty to be solved? You have only, good reader, to turn to the New Testament; there you find in one passage a full and clear solution of the whole matter; we read, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, *He hath declared Him.*" John I. 18. The whole thing is at once transparent to the understanding of a child. The Father, the first Person in the glo-

A text in the NEW solves the difficulty.

rious Trinity, never has been seen by mortal eyes; but the Divine Son of His bosom has been in all ages the Revealer; consequently wherever we read in the Old Testament of God appearing to His creatures there have we a manifestation of God the Son. He it was Who shewed Himself to Abraham in the plains of Mamre and said, "I am the Almighty God. Gen. XVII. 1. He is the same Holy Being as Abraham on another occasion supplicated on behalf of the doomed cities of the plain. Gen. XVIII. 23-33. He it is Who appeared to Moses in the burning bush and revealed Himself as the great "*I AM.*" Exod. III. 14. He is that glorious Being Who manifested Himself amidst the awful thunders and lightning of Sinai; various were the forms which He assumed; now He shewed Himself as a devouring Fire, now as a Mighty Angel, now as a Man of War, but it was ever the same August Being—the Second Person in the holy and blessed Trinity. All those appearances were but anticipative of the last and most wondrous manifestation of all, when, as the beloved Apostle expresses it, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." John I. 14.

The Son has ever been the great Revealer.

Nothing is more solemn and instructive than the way in which the Father in the Old Testament points to the Son of His love. In the very passage in which God said to Moses, "No man can see me and live," He assures him, "My *Presence* shall go with

The Father speaks of the Son as "His Presence" and "His Angel."

thee and I will give thee rest." Exod. XXXIII. 14. What are we to understand by that "Presence" if not that Holy Being "Who is the brightness of His glory and the express Image of His Person?" Heb. I. 3. In still more striking and explicit terms does the Father elsewhere indicate His co-eternal Son. He describes Him as "His Angel" that is, the *sent-One*, the Divine Messenger. "Behold," He says to Israel in notes of awful warning, "I send an Angel before thee . . . beware of Him, and obey His voice; provoke Him not; for He will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in Him." Exod. XXIII. 20, 21. That this was no *created* Angel is abundantly clear from the attributes with which He was endued; to Him pertained the avenging of transgression, to Him belonged its pardon; but who can forgive sins but God only? Numerous are the allusions to this wondrous Angel in the pages of the Old Testament; most commonly He appeared to the Saints of old as an Angel of light, but in almost every instance, as you pursue the narrative, you find that Angel spoken of as the *Lord*, as *Jehovah*, as *God*. Jacob spoke of "the Angel which redeemed him from evil." Gen. XLVIII. 16; whilst Isaiah, in one hallowed formula, combines the utterances of the Father cited above; speaking of the Father's care of Israel he says, "*The Angel of His presence* saved them." Isa. LXIII. 9.

All this echoed in the New Testament.

All this finds its echo in the New Testament; did the Father point to the co-equal Son as "the Angel," the Sent-One? Jesus ever and anon describes Himself as "sent

by the Father;" does the Father say of the Angel "my name is in Him?" Jesus responds "I have come in my Father's name." John. V. 43. Does the Father speaks of the Angel as pardoning transgression and sin? This attribute belonged to Jesus, "The Son of man" said He, "hath power on earth to forgive sins." Matt. IX. 6.

The term "Angel" was thus used by the Father with reference to the *Official* character of the Son; but, elsewhere, we find the Father indicating the close and endearing relation which existed between Himself and that Divine Angel. One thousand years before the advent of Jesus the Father thus addresses Him, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee." Psalm. II. 7; and again, in tones of warning precisely analogous to those addressed to Israel in the wilderness respecting the Angel, He says, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little." Psalm. II. 12. Thus we find the Father pointing to the co-equal and the co-eternal Son ages before that Son became incarnate; He says, "Thou art my Son." Turn now to the New Testament and you find the Father testifying to Jesus of Nazareth as that very Son, though the language is still more emphatic and endearing; on two distinct occasions—at the baptism and the transfiguration of Christ did the Father thus bear witness to Him, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Matt. III. 17. and XVII. 5.

In the O. T. the Father testifies of the Son.

He does the same in the N. T.

An objection and a request.

In regard to those manifestations of the Deity already spoken of some of our readers may be prone to say, "You have told us that Christ was the Divine Being Who thus appeared to the ancients; but is not this a pure assumption? What we want is *positive authority* for connecting Him with any of those appearances." Such clear and positive authority we are able to produce. In the two instances which we are about to cite the reader will see that the response of the New Testament to the *Old* is no uncertain sound.

In the Old Testament we are repeatedly reminded of the "temptation in the wilderness;" we are told how Israel tempted and provoked that God Who had appeared to them and wrought such wonders on their behalf; the expressions used are, "They tempted God," "They tempted Jehovah," "They provoked the Most High God."* What says the New Testament on this subject? The Apostle St. Paul in describing those very temptations and provocations sums up with these remarkable words, "Neither let us *tempt Christ* as some of them also tempted." 1 Cor. X. 9. We thus learn (a) that Christ was with Israel in the wilderness, (b) that it was *He* Who was tempted and provoked by their waywardness, (c) that this same Christ is "Jehovah" and "the Most High God."

He Who was tempted and provoked in the wilderness was 'Christ.'

We have already made a passing allusion to a wondrous vision vouchsafed to the prophet Isaiah; let us

* Deut. VI. 16. Exod. XVII. 7. Psalm. LXXVIII. 56.

now see what is involved in that vision. The Holy Seer writes, "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple; above it stood the Seraphim . . . and one cried unto another and said, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory . . . then said I, Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of Hosts." Isa. VI. 1-5. No one will dispute the fact that the August Being Who in this solemn vision appeared to the trembling prophet was the Almighty and Eternal God; bearing this in mind, let us now turn to the New Testament and see if we can catch a responsive note on this interesting topic. The echo is again clear and full and explicit. In the Gospel of St. John the glorious event recorded by Isaiah is referred to in connection with the Jews' rejection of Christ, and the secred writer adds, "*These things said Isaiah when he saw His (Christ's) glory and spake of Him.*" John. XII. 41. It is thus clear that He Who figured in that awful vision, before Whom the prophet trembled and Whom the Seraphim with veiled faces adored, is the same as 750 years after appeared in human form as the Prophet of Nazareth.

Isaiah's wondrous vision.

The echo of the New Testament says it was 'Christ's glory' the prophet saw.

The prophet Micah in a remarkable passage illustrates the point on which we are insisting, the passage is at once a retrospect and a prediction. As a prediction it, with marvellous precision, defines the very village in which, long centuries after, the Messiah should

The prophet Micah verifies the point on which we insist.

be born. "Bethlehem Ephratah" was to be the favoured spot; and at Bethlehem Ephratah, as we all know, Jesus was actually born. But, no sooner has the prophet delivered the prediction than he glances back upon the sublime *antecedents* of that lowly Babe whose earthly home was to be a stable; he affirms, "He it is Whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting." Micah. V. 2. Yes, in all those visible approaches made by God to His fallen creatures during all past ages, "the goings forth" have been those of the Eternal Son.

The incommunicable name "Jehovah" repeatedly occurs in passages relating to Christ.

Our readers are doubtless aware that, although in the Old Testament God is spoken of under various titles, and some of these (as King, Lord, Judge &c.) may be applied to men, there is one title of the Deity which is absolutely incommunicable; it never can without blasphemy be used with reference to any but the true and living God. So awful was the reverence which the Jews felt for this solemn term that they never ventured even to pronounce it. That word is *Jehovah*. The Eternal One lays undivided claim to this title; His words are, "I am Jehovah, that is my name, and my glory I will not give to another." Isa. XLII. 8. Now the thing which we wish to impress upon our readers is, that this very word, this peculiarly Divine title is the term most commonly used in those passages of the Old Testament which the testimony of the *New* proves to relate to Christ. Several instances of the kind have already been given; we are about to give another; we

would bespeak the reader's serious attention to this passage.

Isaiah, by prophetic vision, is looking forward to the preaching of John the Baptist, the Messiah's precursor; he writes, "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of Jehovah * make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Isa. XL. 3. Clearly and distinctly the response of the New Testament falls on the ear; pointing to the Baptist, St. Matthew says, "This is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight." C. III. 3. The Baptist too says of himself, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord." John I. 23. Surely the comparison of these texts admits of but one conclusion. As the forerunner and witness of Jesus, John fulfilled the prophetic utterance, he prepared *His* way and made straight *His* paths; but Isaiah tells us that He Whose ways should be thus prepared was "Jehovah" and "God."

Issiah's prediction of John the Baptist and what it involves.

In the prophet Malachi we have a parallel prediction. In this case God Himself is the Speaker; He says, "Behold, I will send my messenger and he shall prepare the way before me," Mal. III. 1. which passage Jesus Himself quotes and applies when speaking of John His forerunner. Matt. XI. 10.

Malachi's parallel prediction.

* In every instance in the Old Testament where "Lord" occurs in capitals [LORD] Jehovah is the word in the original Hebrew; such is the case in the above passage.

But the time would fail us to enlarge on all those passages in which the utterance of the Old and New Testaments combine to set forth the true and essential Deity of Jesus Christ. No one can honestly set himself to search out this kind of evidence without being struck with its force and variety; the mutually corroborative testimony of the two portions of the Divine Book to Christ astonish him the more the further he advances.

Perhaps the simplest and most effective way of viewing this evidence is to place, side by side, in separate columns, those texts of the Old and New Testaments which intersect or amplify or illustrate each other in their bearing on Christ. The following list furnishes a specimen of what we mean.

WHAT THE OLD TESTAMENT SAYS OF GOD, OR GOD OF HIMSELF.	WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT SAYS OF JESUS, OR JESUS OF HIMSELF.
"Do not I fill heaven and earth saith the Lord?" Jer. XXIII. 24.	"He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things." Eph. IV. 10.
"Thy throne is established of old; Thou art from everlasting." Psalm XCIII. 2.	"Unto the Son He saith, Thy throne O God, is for ever and ever." Heb. I. 8.

WHAT THE OLD TESTAMENT SAYS OF GOD, OR GOD OF HIMSELF.	WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT SAYS OF JESUS, OR JESUS OF HIMSELF.
"I am the first, and I am the last, and besides me there is no God." Isa. XLIV. 6.	"I am the first and the last. I am he that liveth and was dead." Rev. I. 17. 18.
"I am Jehovah, I change not." Mal. III. 6.	"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever." Heb. XIII. 8.
"I am the Almighty God." Gen. XVII. 1.	"I am . . . the Almighty." Rev. I. 8.
"Canst thou by searching find out God?" Job. XI. 7.	"No man knoweth the Son but the Father." Matt. XI. 27.
"I am the Lord, the Holy one." Isa. XLIII. 3.	"Ye denied the Holy One and the Just." Acts. III. 14.
"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Gen. I. 1.	"In the beginning was the Word. All things were made by Him." John. I. 1, 3.
"I am Jehovah that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the Heavens alone, that spreadeth	"By him were all things created that are in Heaven and that are in earth, visible, and invisible, whe-

WHAT THE OLD TESTAMENT SAYS OF GOD, OR GOD OF HIMSELF.	WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT SAYS OF JESUS OR JESUS OF HIMSELF.
abroad the earth by Myself." Isa. XLIV. 24.	ther thrones or dominions or principalities or powers." Col. I. 16.
"The Lord hath made all things for Himself." Prov. XVI. 4.	All things were created by Him and for Him." Col. I. 16.
"Jehovah is a great King over all the earth." Psalm. XLVII. 2.	"King of Kings, and Lord of Lords." Rev. XIX. 6.
"Thou, even Thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men." 1 Kings. VIII. 39.	"All the Churches shall know that I am He that searcheth the reins and hearts." Rev. II. 23.
"God is Judge Himself." Psalm. L. 6.	"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." 2 Cor. V. 10.
"His Kingdom ruleth over all." Psalm CIII. 19.	"He is Lord of all." Acts X. 36.
"In that day there shall be one Lord and His name one." Zech. XIV. 19.	"To us there is but one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him." 1 Cor. VIII. 6.
"Behold the Lord God will come with strong hand, His reward is with Him." Isa. XL. 10.	"Behold, I come quickly and my reward is with me." Rev. XXII. 12.

WHAT THE OLD TESTAMENT SAYS OF GOD, OR GOD OF HIMSELF.	WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT SAYS OF JESUS, OR JESUS OF HIMSELF.
"I, even I, am Jehovah, and besides me there is no Saviour." Isa. XLIII. 11.	"He is the Author of Eternal Salvation to all that obey Him." Heb. V. 9. "Neither is there Salvation in any other, for there is no other name under Heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" Acts. IV. 12.
"He (Jehovah of Hosts) will swallow up death in victory." Isa. XXV. 8.	"Our Saviour Jesus Christ Who hath abolished death." 2 Tim I. 10.
"I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." Isa. XLV. 23.	"We must all stand at the judgment seat of Christ; for it is written, as I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me and every tongue shall confess to God." Rom. XIV. 10, 11. "To the name of Jesus every knee shall bow." Phil. II. 10.

It would be an easy matter to extend this list; our object, however, is rather to furnish an example of the

mutual bearing of the two Testaments on the subject under discussion than to adduce all the passages of this character ; much will have been gained if this bird's-eye-view of the matter should prompt our readers to follow up for themselves the enquiry into the mutually corroborative testimony of the two parts of the Holy Book on the important doctrine before us. Such an enquiry, candidly and earnestly pursued, cannot fail to satisfy them that Jesus is—*must be*—the very and eternal God ; they will see that all that the one Testament attributes to the Father in particular or to God absolute, the other attributes in its integrity to Jesus of Nazareth ; they will see that the distinctive *titles* of Deity, the powers, perfections, operations of Deity are all ascribed to Him in the New Testament, and ascribed to Him in language precisely similar to that used by holy prophets of old and by God Himself in the *Old ;* Yea, they will ever and anon discern actual *identity* between the Holy Being who erst spake from heaven and the lowly Jesus who centuries after, in human form, spake on earth.

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CHAPTER VII.

What arguments Humanitarians urge against Christ's divinity.

In discussing a subject so solemn and awfully momentous as that which forms the topic of this treatise we feel above all things the importance of *candour*. We are not unconscious of our liability, like all other men, to bias and prejudice. We know full well how possible it is for a man to be so satisfied with the correctness of his own peculiar views, as to think it a work of supererogation to enquire into the arguments of those who oppose them. From such unreasoning one-sidedness, Good Lord deliver us! We have not turned a deaf ear to the objections which are, from time to time, urged against "orthodox" Christianity. We have no wish to be self-deceived on a subject of such tremendous import; and, God forbid that, by a partial and unfair treatment of it, we should mislead and deceive our readers!

Importance of candour in this discussion.

We are far from believing that those who object to the doctrine we maintain are necessarily insincere, or that their objections are so utterly trivial as to be unworthy of consideration; and it is no doubt due to such honest Humanitarians as may read this book that

their view of the subject should be fairly and candidly discussed. Certain it is, if no notice were to be taken of their objections our very silence might be misconstrued; it might be thought we hesitated to grapple with such grave difficulties or doubted the prudence of presenting them to the view of general readers. Neither the one nor the other feeling actuates us. Whilst we admit the difficulty of some of the objections urged, we are assured that they may all be so answered as to shew that, neither one in particular nor all combined, justify a belief at variance with the great truth for which we contend, that Jesus of Nazareth was none other than "God manifest in the flesh."

Why we discuss Humanitarian objections.

Humanitarians ground their objections (1) on an appeal to early church history and (2) on a consideration of certain Scriptural statements.

In an earlier part of this work we necessarily encountered and answered a *general* objection of the former class. We remarked that it had been stated in broad terms that the doctrine of Christ's essential Godhead must be dated from the Council of Nice A. D. 325, and that, prior to that period, the prevailing notions of Christians harmonised in the main with the Humanitarian theory. In order to rebut this assertion we, beginning at the Nicene Council, took a retrospective survey of the teaching of the Church of Christ as to its Sacred Head up to the very days of the Apostles themselves; we listened to the confessions of martyrs, the dogmatic statements of doctors and fathers; the Hymns and

A 'general' objection already answered.

prayers in which the doctrine of the early Christians found expression; and the result of the enquiry was a full, clear, and positive proof that the faith of the ante-Nicene Church was, in all essential respects, the very same as that enunciated by the Fathers of the Nicene Council; that, in short, the doctrine of the true and essential divinity of Jesus Christ had ever been held and gloried in by the Catholic Church as the grand basis of all its teachings and the sacred source of all its aspirations and hopes.

In the present chapter we have to notice, not the general assertion just indicated, but the specific statements by which Humanitarians endeavour to justify it.

Humanitarians claim high antiquity for their views.

In the first place our attention is called to the extreme antiquity of the Humanitarian family. We are requested to trace its pedigree up to a period long anterior to the Council of Nice. We are told of the Ebionites in the first century, of the followers of Basilides, Valentinus and Theodotus in the second and third centuries, all of whom rejected the divinity of Christ and propounded views more or less in accordance with those which are known by the term "Humanitarian."

We readily concede the claim.

We at once without a scruple concede the relationship claimed by our friends. We have never branded their notions with the stigma of *novelty*; we know full well their views are very ancient indeed; they may be traced to a period anterior to the most ancient of the Sects just named. The great body of the Jewish nations in

the time of Christ was decidedly Humanitarian. The prevailing cry was, "As for this fellow we know whence he is; he is the son of Joseph the Carpenter; and he *being a man* makes himself to be God."

The wonder is 'not' that many rejected the doctrine, but that many believed it.

And when we consider the nature of the case it will cease to be a matter of wonder that there have been persons in every age who have rejected the doctrine for which we are contending. That a poor Jewish peasant who finished his career by an ignominious death on the cross, should be recognised and worshipped as the Almighty and eternal God is, on the face of it, so extremely improbable, that the marvel is, not that many rejected the idea, but that any considerable body of men heartily and honestly accepted it. The first impulse of the natural mind, whether of Jews or Gentiles, must have been to spurn the notion as absurd. No one can read the lively, biting sarcasm of Celsus, the great opponent of early Christianity, without feeling this; he, in a strain of pleasant raillery, which only sets off the more forcibly his inward contempt, asks the Christians what they have been about to deify a person so insignificant and despicable as Jesus Christ:

The biting sarcasm of Celsus.

he asks them on what possible grounds they could expect their wild scheme to prevail; could it be supposed, he enquires, that the world would surrender the mighty heroes whom, with some show of reason, they worshipped as gods, in order to fall down at the feet of a malefactor? He says, "Let me advise you to give up your fruitless attempt and exchange your Christ for

some one or other of the distinguished deities already honored amongst men; thus you may hope to succeed."

Such is a type of the feeling and impression which the proclamation of the Godhead of Jesus Christ was sure to awaken in the minds of ordinary men. Humanly speaking, the doctrine had to fight its way against odds so tremendous and obstacles so apparently insuperable, that its ultimate triumph strikes the mind as nothing short of miraculous. On what other ground can the great fact be explained that, somehow or other, this "impossible" doctrine gradually subverted the idolatrous systems of Rome and Greece, and abolished the numerous deities to whom a thousand generations had bowed down in adoration, whilst in East, West, North and South tens of thousands of Christians were ready to lay down their lives for the great truth that the Crucified Nazarene was the very and eternal God? But you object that we are assuming what we have yet to prove; be it so; we hope soon to justify all we say; but the point we contend for and which our Humanitarian friends will hardly dispute is that, though there was nothing strange in the doctrine of Christ's Godhead being rejected, there was something very strange indeed in its being cordially and heartily received by multitudes of intelligent, devout, and earnest men. To us the mystery vanishes when we dwell upon the declaration of Jesus in answer to that remarkable confession of Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

Does not the triumph of the doctrine, under all the circumstances, strike one as miraculous.

How is the mystery explained.

(Matt. XVI. 16.) "Blessed art thou," said the Saviour, "for flesh and blood hath not revealed this to Thee but my Father which is in heaven." Even so; the doctrine was from heaven, and this explains its success.

The Sects mentioned were all outside the Church.

As regards the Humanitarian sects, whose names we have mentioned above, it should ever be borne in mind that they were *outside the Church of Christ.* So far from their representing the views of Christians in general, the Catholic Church utterly denounced their teaching and branded them as heretics and apostates: they were cut off from the communion of the faithful, and found no sympathy or support except from the isolated band of followers which they managed to gather round them. Nothing indeed to our mind affords a more convincing proof that those views were alien to the faith of the Church than the vehement zeal and holy indignation which their proclamation evoked. Indeed, all through the early history of the Church we note an unflinching determination of its members to maintain intact the doctrine of the essential divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. They evidently felt that to touch this was to touch the apple of their eye.

The zeal of the early Christians in defending this doctrine.

They zealously guarded this doctrine as the grand central truth of the Christian system.

It is true that Arius, by the subtlety of his genius and the obscurity of his language, for a while deceived great numbers of orthodox Christians, both of clergy and laity. When one considers the terms in which this astute man spoke of Christ and the powers which he attributed

Multitudes ensnared by Arian teaching.

to Him, it ceases to be a matter of surprise that multitudes, unskilled in the art of critical analysis, should have fallen into his snare. When they heard Arius speak in terms of profound devotion of Jesus as the Word of God; declare that He was pre-existent and that he was endued with creative power, and was deserving of the adoration of man, it would very naturally occur to many simple and ingenuous souls to ask, "what more could you wish?" But men of keener discernment and deeper learning easily discovered the true drift of the theory; they pointed out the deadly error which it involved; the Church took the alarm; in a Council held at Alexandria A. D. 320, under Alexander, the Bishop of that City, the teaching of Arius was condemned and he himself was expelled from the communion of the Church. This was a *provincial* Council only; it dealt with Arius as a presbyter of the Church of Alexandria; but this was felt to be a matter of such gravity that, five years after, a general Council, in which the whole Church should be represented, was convoked and met at Nice. To that Council did the Churches of Christendom send 380 Bishops to give a final and authoritative decision on the Arian controversy. The condemnation of the Council of Alexandria was fully confirmed; the teaching of Arius was pronounced heretical and false, and equally at variance with the voice of Scripture and of the Church of Christ.

But the Church soon took the alarm and excommunicated the heretic.

In order to screen the faithful from the peril of this or similar errors, the faith which the Church had ever held re-

The action taken by the Council of Nice.

specting her adorable Head, was expressed in a creed which has been a watchword of the Church for fifteen centuries past. The Nicene creed declares Jesus Christ to be, "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made; being of one substance with the Father by whom all things were made."*

The Church had thus spoken, she had declared what the true faith was, she had denounced the insidious

* It is not altogether improbable that an objection long ago answered and exploded, may be revived in connection with this part of our argument. The objector asks, "Is it not a fact that at a Council held at Antioch about 60 years before the Council of Nice, the expression *Homoousion* (of one substance), as describing the substantial oneness of the Father and the Son was repudiated, whilst at the Council of Nice the very same term was adopted and enforced? So much for the consistency of Councils!" This statement thus boldly propounded may well startle and surprise the uniformed. But what is the solution of the whole matter? It is this; long before the Council of Antioch the expression *Homoousion* had become a sort of household word among orthodox Christians. It was used by them to denote the fact of the essential oneness of Christ with the Father as respects His divinity. Such was the sense which the word bore up to the period of the Council in question. That Council was convoked in order to try a famous heretic named Paul of Samosata. Paul was a man of singular astuteness and consummate skill; he argued that, philosophically and philologically the word *Homoousion* involved a division of the substance of the Deity, such a substance having existed prior to the Father and the Son, and that the Father and the Son being evolved from that substance were properly said to be *Homoousion* and parts of that one substance. He asked the members of the Council, if they accepted that definition of doctrine; their unanimous reply was, of course, a decided negative; but, as Paul, in his subtlety, had attached such an erroneous meaning to the words

attack which had been made upon the foundation of her hopes; but this did not extinguish the error; like a subtle poison the heresy spread far and wide. No doubt, a main cause of the continued popularity of Arius was the imperial favor which was vouchsafed to him. Two or three years after the Council of Nice, Constantine recalled him from his exile and repealed the laws which had been enacted against him. The Arian party also found a protector in Constantius, the son of Constantine. Thus did two Emperors cast their *Ægis* over the heresy which the Church had denounced, a circumstance which goes a long way towards accounting for the prevalence of Arianism on which Humanitarians are so fond of dilating?.* But *the church maintained its ground*, and neither the defection of individual members nor the pressure of Imperial

Imperial favor, in a great degree, accounts for the continued prevalence of Arianism.

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it was judged best to give up the word itself, lest perchance it should, by such a misconstruction, be made a loop-hole to error. At the Council of Nice, the word was restored and used in the condemnation of the Arian heresy—why? Simply because the members of the Council rejected the sense put upon it by Paul as untenable. In short, they maintained that the word strictly and properly meant, not what he said, but what the whole Church prior to the Council of Antioch had taken it to mean, and what the Fathers of the latter Council had understood it to mean, until misled by the sophistry of the Samosatene heretic. It is thus evident that, instead of discord between the two Councils, there was perfect oneness and harmony in their respective views of the great doctrine under discussion. *See Bishop Bull's Defence of the Nicene Creed. pp.* 72-78.

* It does not by any means follow that modern Humanitarians

influence could induce it to waver in its allegiance to the faith once delivered to the saints. At any rate, Arius and his teaching were utterly repudiated and condemned as heretical by orthodox Christians; and the Universal Church, acting in its corporate capacity, purged itself from all contact with the pernicious error by cutting off from its communion the apostate teacher

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are one in feeling and conviction with their Arian predecessors; indeed, if we except the one common point of agreement, the denial of Christ's Divinity, there is very little in common between the majority of modern Humanitarians and Arians of old. The history of the Humanitarian teaching is most suggestive. On the one hand, the faith of the Church of Christ has throughout 18 centuries remained one and the same on the cardinal doctrine of Christ's Deity; differences there have been many and not unimportant on other topics among the Churches of Christendom; but on this grand fundamental doctrine *all have been, all are agreed*, all worship at the feet of Jesus and acknowledge him to be God incarnate. It has been very different with Humanitarianism; its course has been *downward*, it has gradually receded from the high ground occupied by the primitive advocates of the theory; this has been especially the case during the present century. We have noticed already the comparatively exalted views of Christ propounded by Arius. Faustus Socinus and his original followers in the sixteenth century held that, though Christ was a created being, yet he was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and was, therefore, called the "Son of God," and that, on account of his obedience and devotion, God exalted him afterwards to divine honor and dignity; consequently, the Racovian catechism and the Socinian confession of faith say, "They are not to be called Christians who do not adore Christ." But in the nature of things such views must gravitate to a lower level; such has been their tendency; and, we suspect, there are but few Humanitarians in our day who do not repudiate the dignities which their predecessors accorded to Christ and deny Him the worship which they enjoined.

and his followers. Therefore, to cite the doctrines of Arius as in any way typical of primitive Christianity is as unfair as it is untrue.

Humanitarians have, we frankly admit, more show of reason and plausibility in another line of argument which they are not slow to advance. In this case they profess to meet us on a common platform; they confront us with certain dubious statements of doctrine by several Fathers and Doctors of the early Church, whose orthodoxy was never impugned and who died as they lived in full communion with the Catholic Church, and they ask us whether those statements were *in* harmony with the subsequent deliverance of the Council of Nice. They point, for instance, to a passage in which Justyn Martyr defines Christ as, "Another God under the Creator." They cite another passage from Clement of Alexandria which speaks of the *Logos* (the Word) as "the second Principle of things." They quote other sentences from the writings of Anthenagoras, Tatian and Theophilus, which seem to imply that the Word was called into existence at the creation; they moreover adduce expressions from the works of that most learned but most erratic author, Origen, which lay great stress on the subordination of the Son to the Father, and even seem to suggest a doubt as to the propriety of offering prayer to the Son. A few passages from Tertullian of a similar drift are also cited.

Another objection has more show of reason and plausibility.

We do not deny the existence of those passages. Were our object to maintain the orthodoxy of those honored and holy men, we might point out to our

readers that those particular expressions which at first sight appear so strange and startling, do really admit of a sense different to that which, in their naked baldness, they seem to suggest. But this is *not* our object. If our opponents will have it that those Ante-Nicene Writers were unsound when judged by the orthodox standard, we will not lose time by endeavouring to correct their mistake; admit that they were unsound and what then? Those good men never claimed infallibility for themselves, nor did the Church ever ascribe to them that attribute. To quote their particular utterances as the authoritative voice of the Church is as reasonable as it would be to confound the private statements of individual members of the British Parliament or of the Indian Legislative Council with the enactments solemnly approved and passed into law by those august assemblies. It should be borne in mind that Jesus never promised exemption from error to individual members of His Church; but He did promise His Church that "the gates of hell should not prevail against it." Matt. XVI. 18. This promise carried with it an assurance that the true Church, in its corporate capacity, should be preserved from fatal error as well as from other evils which the malice or subtlety of Satan might seek to bring upon it.

But these venerable Authors never claimed to be infallible, nor did the Church ever pronounce them to be such.

One is naturally led to enquire with what object our Humanitarian friends cite those eccentric passages and summon their venerable authors into Court; it can hardly

With what object are those passages cited?

be that they hope to establish a sort of doctrinal relationship with those early Christian writers; however sanguine they may be, they must utterly despair of bringing the names above mentioned within the far-reaching Humanitarian pedigree.

However loosely or incautiously those venerable men may have expressed themselves on certain subjects, they at least held with unflinching tenacity the grand truth of the essential Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ; with regard to this one great fact their trumpet never gave an uncertain sound. Listen, O reader, if you have a doubt on this point, to the way in which Justyn and Origen, the two who use the greatest license of expression, speak of the adorable Saviour. Justyn says, "He, the Word, is the First-born of God and *therefore God*." He points out that it was this same wondrous Being who had appeared as "the God of Abraham and Isaac and of Jacob." And that he is sometimes called "the glory of the Lord, sometimes the Son, sometimes Wisdom and Angel, and *sometimes God*." Origen speaks of "The God Jesus," He says, "The Word, the Image of God is God." "The Son is as truly Almighty as the Father." Again, "Christ, as very God, is present in all the world." We suspect Humanitarians will hardly be flattered at one strong expression of opinion put forth by Origen; he says, he can only account for men's disbelief in the divinity of Christ by a kind of "mental obliquity." Upon the whole therefore it is pretty evident that the writers in question are, in res-

However loosely they might express themselves, they certainly clave to the great doctrine of Christ's deity.

pect of the great doctrine under discussion, entirely *with us*, and not at all with our antagonists.

We must beg our readers to keep before their minds the *one topic* which we have in mind; we must not be thrown off our track by an irrelevant quirk; we are not now asking what the primitive Church held or taught on theological subjects in general, or how some of its leading members expressed their peculiar views;—the one only point which is before us is this—did the Ante-Nicene Church or did it not, hold to the doctrine of the true and essential Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ? This question admits of but one reply; we have already, in a former part of this work, adduced the most irrefragable evidence on this point; we have seen that the literature of the early Church, its songs and praises, its formal declarations of faith, the confessions of holy Martyrs—yea, the very accusations and taunts of the heathen, all go to place beyond reasonable doubt the fact that, the Ante-Nicene Church held as fully and as strongly the true Divinity of Christ as did the Nicene Council itself.

What is the one subject of enquiry before us.

We pass on to note some of the leading objections of Humanitarians grounded on an appeal to Scripture. In the first place, they point us to the reiterated declarations of the Divine Unity which pervade the sacred page, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." They also remind us that the Holy One has solemnly averred that He will not share His Glory with another. These divine statements they consider to be irreconcileable

Objections grounded on Scripture.

with the notion of Christ's essential Deity. This objection lies directly against the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and would be more properly answered in a defence of that solemn verity than in our present treatise; we remark however in general that, seeing orthodox Christians maintain the Unity of God and His absolute supremacy as fully and heartily as do Humanitarians themselves, they cannot admit the relevancy of this objection as urged against their views. If, according to Catholic teaching, and the declaration of Christ Himself, such a wondrous union exists between the Father and Son that Christ is One with the Father and the Father One with Him, the doctrine of the Divine Unity is in no degree impugned by the orthodox theory.

The objection in respect of the divine Unity answered.

In connection with this point an utterance of Christ Himself is sometimes urged as incompatible with the above statement. In that marvellous prayer addressed by Jesus to the Father the night before He suffered, He says, "This is life Eternal, that they might know Thee, *the only true God* and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." John. XVII. 3. Here it is contended that, although Jesus implies the knowledge of Himself and the Father to constitute Eternal life, He yet very clearly speaks of the Father as the "*only true God;*" how then, it is asked, can Christ be God too? We answer as we have answered above—by virtue of that wondrous union which from all eternity has subsisted between the Father and the Son. It so happens that in this particular instance we have an in-

"If the Father be the only true God how can Jesus be God too?"

spired commentary pointing us to this very solution. The same apostle as records the above expression of Jesus, and may certainly be supposed to have understood its drift, in writing one of his epistles, uses precisely similar language with reference to Christ Himself. What Christ says of the Father, that John says of Christ; his words are—speaking, be it remembered, directly of Jesus—"*This is the true God and eternal life.*" 1 John. V. 20. It is impossible to compare the two passages without feeling that the latter is a quotation of the former;* and the mutual bearing of the one passage on the other is a beautiful illustration of the way in which the Divine Book explains itself.

An inspired commentary points to the true solution.

Very much is made by our opponents of two or three passages in which, as they say, "Christ repudiated the notions of His divinity." One of these is the interrogatory addressed to the rich young man, Matt. XIX. 17. This person came to Christ and said, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" Christ replied, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but One, that is God," "Surely" it is contended, "Christ in these words utterly ignores and disclaims all pretension to divinity." We freely admit that, to such persons as can only look on the surface of things, such an inference may appear to be suggested by the words of Christ; but we venture to predict that no one who takes the

Did not Christ's address to the young man shew that He disclaimed all pretension to divinity?

* In the original Greek the language in each passage is almsot word for word the same.

trouble to weigh the actual import of the passage will gather that sense. For, first of all, be it noted, Jesus *repudiated nothing*; He simply proposed a query and made a statement of fact; He did *not* say, "I am not God, why then callest thou me good?" He simply asks why—on what grounds, that young man applied to Him the epithet "*good*" for the word could only be applied in strictest truth and propriety to *One* and that One *God*.

Now we put it to our readers whether it does not strike them as highly probable that these words involved something deeper than at first sight meets the eye; in short, that there was somewhat in the character or opinions of that young man to which the Saviour in His appeal made implicit reference. We trust none of our readers are prepared to represent Jesus as a trifler or as grossly inconsistent with Himself; yet the Humanitarian interpretation of this passage inevitably necessitates this strange implication; for, if nothing beyond this,—if no deeper principle were involved, then—we say it advisedly— the words of Christ revealed unaccountable affectation and weakness. Can it be gravely supposed that Jesus meant to censure and reprobate the application of the adjective "good" by a man to his fellowman? Was this the *great* lesson which he meant to convey, that this word should be blotted out from the social vocabulary? And did he mean to imply that he was offended at the application to himself of such an ordinary formula of respectful address as "Good Master?"

The Humanitarian sense makes Christ a trifler and inconsistent with Himself.

Would such a display of sentimentality and exaggerated humility be in keeping with the usual tone and spirit which marked the great Teacher? We trow not. But such an interpretation makes Jesus grossly inconsistent with Himself; on other occasions we find Him accepting with approval the highest homage from man —Yea, claiming it as His right—Yea, demanding that "All men shall honor Him even as they honor the Father." (John. V. 3.) Yet we are to believe that, on the occasion before us, He deprecated an address of the commonest courtesy as surpassing His deserts! But the wonder grows the further we advance. What! did Jesus never assert his holiness, and challenge His enemies to disprove His sinlessness? (John. VIII. 46.) Are we then to suppose that He *there* declared He was sinless and *here* denied that He was good? But let us go a step further; did Jesus on no occasion call Himself *good?*

Did Jesus never call Himself 'good'?

Turn, good reader, to the tenth Chapter of St. John and you will discover that, Jesus three times in four consecutive verses applies to himself the very epithet which, we are told, in the passage before us He rejects. "I am," says Jesus, "the *good* Shepherd—I am the *good* Shepherd—the *good* Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." v. v. 11-14. Shall we then believe, that what Jesus said on one occasion He flatly contradicted on another? So far as we can see, there is no escape from such an incredible conclusion for all those who cling to the Humanitarian exposition of this passage.

We cannot but think that our readers already feel

with ourselves that the *superficial* interpretation must be given up; they cannot conceive that, when the manifest aim of Christ was to convince men that He was holy and good, and when He repeatedly spoke of Himself as "*good*" He here meant to stultify and contradict Himself in so palpable a way as is implied. It must be conceded that, whatever else He meant, He did *not* mean to deny that He was good, and consequently did not mean to deny that he was God. Manifestly we must look for some other and a deeper sense—for a sense which will be in harmony with the tenor of Christ's teaching.

Now, although we know very little about the history of the young man who came to Christ, we are yet entitled to infer that his thoughts had been exercised more or less as to the character of that remarkable Person from whom he sought a solution of that most momentous query, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" That he should turn away from the authorised religious teachers of the day, the High Priest, the scribes and the multitude of grave and learned Rabbis, to seek instruction on so vital a topic from the despised prophet of Nazareth, testified to a degree of faith in and devotion towards that Prophet which must have been the result of serious thought and reflection; he had got, we may fairly assume, so far that, like Nicodemus, (John. III. 2) he was fully convinced that Jesus was a "Teacher sent from God," he probably would admit Him to be the great Prophet that should come into the world, (John I. 21) but further he was not pre-

With what views and feelings did the young man come to Christ?

pared to go; he would honor Christ as the greatest of men, but hesitated to ascribe to Him the attributes of Deity. He thus came to Christ under a false impression as to his actual nature and being; but the question which he proposed was of such a character as, above all things, called for a right view of Christ's person; he wanted to know how to obtain "eternal life." Well, in what does eternal life consist? In the passage previously discussed Jesus Himself tells us, it consists in the knowledge of the Father and the Son; whilst St. John pointing to Jesus says, "This is the true God and *eternal life*." How then could he get the eternal life which he sought, unless he knew and acknowledged Him Who is its Source and Substance.* It may be inferred that this young man, like many more in Judea, had debated with himself the question of Christ's claims to a Divine Messiahship; but here he stumbled and hesitated. Whether it was honest doubt which deterred him, or whether it was the fear of man—"the Jews having already agreed that if any man did confess that He was Christ he should be cast out of the synagogue." John IX. 22.—we know not; but without doubt the query of

His question was such as to necessitate a right view of Christ's person in order to its solution.

The appeal of Christ was a home-thrust to his conscience.

* Jesus in His conversation with the woman of Samaria very pointedly indicates the absolute need of a right view of His Person for the obtaining of spiritual gifts, He says to that dark but sincere soul, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and "*Who it is that saith unto thee give me to drink*, thou wouldest have asked of Him and He would have given thee Living Water." John IV. 10.

Jesus was a home-thrust to his conscience; it was a tentative appeal intended to facilitate conviction and to draw from him a sound and sincere avowal of faith in the Son of God. The Saviour asks, "How,—in what sense do you address me as good? is it in that limited and conventional sense in which you call *men* good, or is it in the sense in which only *God* is good—the real, the infinite, the absolute, the Supreme Good?"

The last injunction of Jesus to the young man is entirely in agreement with this interpretation but utterly at variance with the *superficial* sense. The young man declared he had kept all the commandments quoted; "And said he, what lack I yet? what more is needful to the obtaining of eternal life?" "Only one thing," said Jesus; and what was that? It was that he should utterly renounce that which was most dear to him—that which stood in the way of his decision; "And," says the Saviour, "*Come and follow me.*" What reader of the New Testament does not know the tremendous import of such a charge from the lips of Jesus? "Come and follow me," meant infinitely more than an injunction to be an *imitator* of Christ; it involved a total surrender of the whole man to His service. Hearken to Christ's own comment on this subject. "If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple; and whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me he cannot be my disciple." Luke. XIV. 26, 27.

The last Injunction of Christ to the young man accords with this exposition.

Our final word then is this,—can it be supposed that Jesus began his conversation with this young man by admonishing him for calling Him good, and ended by making such a tremendous demand upon his devotion and self-surrender as is involved in the concluding charge—a demand, be it remembered, which it is preposterous to think of a man making upon his fellow-man in any case whatever? The question has only to be asked to be answered.*

The sum of the whole matter.

* The method (to use a familiar expression) of "drawing out" His hearers by a pregnant question suggesting an answer bearing on the truth of His nature, was not an uncommon mode of instruction with Jesus. Several instances of the kind are recorded in the Gospels. One of these is to a great extent analagous to the above passage. He asked the Pharisees, we are told, "What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is he?" They replied, "He is the Son of David." This answer was true so far as it went, but it was *inadequate* and incomplete; it simply took in the idea of a *human* Messiah, lineally descended from David, whilst it entirely omitted all reference to His *Divine* character. Mark now, how Christ tries to lead them on to a higher and more perfect view—how, in fact, by an ingenious question, He suggests to them the important point which they had overlooked, or rather wilfully ignored; quoting the prophetic words of David respecting Christ in Psalm 110, He asks, "If David then call Him Lord, how is He his Son? The drift of the query was sufficiently transparent, and the only answer which could meet it was a confession of the great truth that, *as God He was David's Lord*, whilst as a man He was David's Son. There is no room for doubt that this was the answer for which Christ was *feeling* and waiting, and the stubborn silence of His auditors clearly denotes that they well understood His aim, but, like the young man above, they declined to make the avowal He desired. Matt. XXII.

Our readers will not fail to observe that this passage presents

Another leading objection has been already disposed of.

Another passage on which very much stress is laid by our opposers is that in which Jesus answers the charge of the Jews that He made Himself to be God, by quoting a well-known text from Psalm LXXXII. As we had occasion to cite that passage in the previous chapter, we will content ourselves by referring our readers back to the discussion of the text on *pp.* 155-8. We have here merely to remark that it is a singular fact, that some of the passages put forth by Humanitarians with the utmost confidence as strongly corroborative of their views do, when more thoroughly examined, stand out prominently as supporting the very doctrine which they reject. This is certainly the case with the present passage and with the one last considered.

"My Father is greater than I."

Another text which has ever been regarded as a tower of strength by the oppugners of Catholic doctrine is the utterance of Jesus, "My Father is greater than I." John. XIV. 28. "This statement," says a Humanitarian writer, "is a demonstration that Christ is *not* the true God, than whom none is or can be greater."

It has already been assumed as a thing which most persons will admit, that Jesus could neither flatly con-

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us with a striking, though indirect, proof of Christ's claim to Divinity. We say *indirect*, because, His query related to the view which His hearers had of the Messiah *in the abstract;* He well knew that they rejected his personal claims to be the Messiah, but to all such as admit those claims His words present, as we have said, a striking proof that he claimed to be Divine.

tradict Himself nor yet give expression to that which was weak and trifling. It must then be borne in mind that a few days before the Saviour spoke the words now before us, another memorable utterance fell from His lips. Then His declaration was, "I and my Father are one." (John. X. 30) Here he says, "My Father is greater than I." On the surface the two statements appear to be mutually opposed, a note of seeming discord first strikes the *ear;* but surely we have every reason to suppose that in the mind of Christ the Speaker there was a perfect apprehension of harmony between those two statements; and, consequently, that mode of exposition which places those two utterances in antagonism to each other can hardly be the right one. Humanitarians say, "We do *not* make the two passages at variance, we so explain them as to preserve their mutual harmony."

It is agreed that Christ could neither contradict Himself nor utter that which was weak and trifling.

Let us see how they accomplish this;—first of all they set out with the assumption that, when Jesus speaks of the Father as being *greater than HIMSELF,* He is speaking of His relation as a creature to the Creator; but when they come to deal with the opposite text they take entirely new ground; they deny that when He says, "I and the Father are one," He is indicating in any sense His position in the order of being with reference to the Father; they say, "No, the comparison with the Father here is of a different character; he is not here asserting that he is one in

They explain the two passages respectively on different principles.

nature or attributes with the Father, but that he is *one in aim, in motive and will* with the Father, he says no more than any good man may say who is conscious that his heart beats in unison with the divine mind and will." We cannot help pausing a moment to enquire whether our readers really think that a truly good man, who must as a matter of course be a *humble man*, (and all the more humble the more he is advanced in goodness) could even conceive in his heart much less express with his lips, a sentiment so strangely self-complacent, if not presumptuous, as that which Jesus uttered; could a good *man* ever venture to say, "In spirit, in aim, in will, *I and God are one*"? One instinctively feels that, *as a good man merely*, Jesus never could have spoken these words.

Could Jesus as a good man have used these words?

But in truth the whole context repels and nullifies this interpretation; the reader will at once see that Jesus is speaking, not of a *moral* but of a *dynamic* oneness between Him and the Father. He is speaking of the eternal security of his people as resulting from the fact that they are sustained by His mighty hand and that of His Father conjointly. He compares "My hand" with "My Father's hand," in each case clearly indicating, not moral sympathy or oneness, but co-ordinate and *co-operative energy*; in this sense and in no other, if words have any meaning, Jesus summed up with the declaration, "I and my Father are one."

The context repels this interpretation.

That the Jews did not misread His meaning—that they never dreamt of His implying a merely sympathe-

tic or moral oneness, is abundantly manifest; their angry vociferation, "Thou being a *man* makest thyself God," and their attempt to stone Him, most clearly testify the sense in which they understood His utterance; add to this the fact that Jesus, instead of correcting their misapprehension, actually went on to re-affirm His claim and establish their charge, insomuch that they again assayed to lay violent hands upon Him—put all these things together and, we suspect, there will be little room left for doubt as to the actual sense which Jesus meant the words to bear.

The Jews rightly understood His meaning.

We make no apology for reproducing much of what occurs in a previous chapter on this subject, for, we strongly feel that the two pregnant sentences before us ought to stand side by side in any enquiry into the meaning of either. Taken together they give us, as it were, a complete view of Christ—a view of Him in His *two-fold nature* as God and man. We believe the Saviour spake those two sentences and caused them to be recorded in the volume of Inspiration with the purpose of aiding weak, erring man rightly to comprehend Himself, Whom to know is life eternal. The two vital truths which inhere in His wondrous Person and dual nature are clearly indicated and mutually guarded by those two weighty sayings.

Christ's dual nature indicated by those two sentences.

We have seen that Humanitarians with singular inconsistency explain the one passage *literally* as descriptive of Christ's *actual nature and being* in relation to the Father, the other *figuratively* as pointing to cer-

tain features of *moral resemblance* between Him and the Father. Of course there was no help for them, for consistency would have ruined them; had they applied the same principle of interpretation to the words, "I and my Father are one" that they applied to the opposite utterance, their theory would necessarily have fallen with that admission, and they must have conceded all that we are contending for. Happily *our* position depends for its maintenance on no such unworthy shifts, it necessitates no such inconsistency. We explain the two passages on one and the same principle; we maintain that each utterance bears upon the *actual nature* of Christ. "I and my Father are one"—here He points to His *Divine* nature; "My Father is greater than I,"—here He points to His *Humanity*; so that, to adopt the concise and expressive words of a time-honored Formula, He is, "Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, inferior to the Father as touching His manhood."*

Humanitarians inconsistent in explaining the two passages.

It has always seemed to us that, in respect of the *second* utterance of Jesus you have only, so to speak, steadily to look it in the face to be powerfully convinced that the Humanitarian exposition is utterly untenable. It is a point of almost universal agreement that Jesus was neither trifling in tone nor imbecile in argument. But, accept the sense attached to this passage by our opponents, and there is no denying the fact that Jesus gave expression to the

Could Christ utter such a self-evident truism as their interpretation involves.

* The Athanasian Creed.

veriest truism—a truism with which nothing can compare in weakness and pointlessness. You may pardon a man for gravely telling you that the Ocean is larger than a Tank, and the Universe more extended than your sitting room, though you are sure to smile at his simplicity; but what could you feel but wondering contempt for a man who should tell you that he had made the *marvellous* discovery that "*God was greater than he!*"

A secular illustration.

In a case like this one may perhaps be excused for comparing spiritual things with profane. It is recorded of the great humorist Charles Lamb, that on one occasion, at the dinner table, an innocent country gentleman turning to him made the very innocent remark, "Would you not say Mr. Lamb, that *Shakespeare was a great man?*" Need it be told that the enquiry acted like an electric shock upon the astonished Lamb! To such a worshipper of the great Dramatist this query presented itself as so supremely silly and pointless that the only answer he could give was to jump from his seat and caper about the room with a look of inexpressible suprise and contempt.

Jesus could never have compared himself to the Father in respect of 'greatness' at all had he been a mere man.

Now mark what our Humanitarian friends ask us to believe;—they tell us that Jesus, sitting among His disciples as *a man amongst men*, knowing Himself to be, and known by them to be, marely a man—puts forth with all gravity the proposition, "My Father is greater than I." He communicates to them, as something of which possibly they might be ignorant, the information that *God is greater than a man!* Is not the supposition absurd in the extreme? One feels that Jesus, *as a*

good and sensible man, could never have compared himself to God in respect of *greatness* at all, much less have given expression to such a strangely self-evident deduction. There must then have been implied and involved in Christ's words *some admitted basis of comparison* between himself and the Father;—where shall we find such a *basis?* Surely it is only to be found in the mysterious union which existed between the Divine and Human natures in the man Christ Jesus. Speaking as a mere man, His language would have been incongruous and weak; but, view Him as the *God-man* speaking of his human and inferior nature, and all incongruity and weakness vanish at once.

There was a basis of comparison.

The foregoing passages are adduced—with how little reason we have seen—as *directly* opposed to the doctrine of Christ's Divinity; besides those there is a goodly number of texts which Humanitarians bring forward as *indirectly* discountenancing that doctrine. These passages are said to be so irreconcileable with the idea of Christ's true and essential Godhead that the mere citation of them must *perforce* repel that idea as impossible; they are said to be words which are predicated and which may be predicated with undoubted propriety of any good man, but which are utterly irrelevant and out of place when applied to God. We will first of all give a list of the passages on which the most reliance is placed by the objectors and then calmly examine the conclusion drawn from them.

Passages said by Humanitarians to discountenance the doctrine of Christ's Divinity.

Very much is made of a text relating to the child-

hood of Jesus Christ; we are told, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man." Luke, II. 52. "But" it is argued, "the idea of increasing wisdom and knowledge is incompatible with the notion of Deity." Then again, the fact that Jesus sought grace and assistance by the exercise of prayer does not, it is said, accord with the doctrine of His divinity, "God cannot pray; it is the homage of a creature to the Creator." The emphatic declaration of Jesus, "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, *neither the Son*, but the Father," (Mark XIII. 32) it is argued, these words never could have been uttered by Jesus if He were divine, for God's knowledge admits of no limitation. It is further contended that, if Jesus had been Divine there could have been no divergence between His will and that of the Father; but His own words are, "I came down from heaven *not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me*," (John VI. 38) and in the garden we find him praying "not *my* will but *thine* be done." Luke. XXII. 42. The following utterances of Christ are said to prove incontestably his dependence upon, and subjection to, God as Supreme, and also to establish his own personal inability;—"The words which I speak unto you I speak not of myself. . . The word which ye hear is not mine but the Father's which sent me." John XIV. 10, 28. "I can of my own self do nothing. The Son can do nothing of himself." John V. 6,30. "If I honor myself my honor is nothing. . . I seek not mine own glory." John VIII. 50,54.

A collection of such passages

Our first remark in reply shall be to repeat the solemn caution we have before given against tampering with God's word. The man who hunts the Bible for convenient texts to support a pre-conceived theory is in imminent peril of self-delusion; for his tendency is to ignore every passage which does not chime in with his partial views, although such passages if put side by side with his favorite texts, and weighed in an even balance along with them, would certainly moderate and possibly rectify his crude notions. In all our researches in the Sacred Book, "*doing nothing by partiality*" should be our motto. If we wish to get at the *whole truth*, we must take the Bible *as a whole*, and, instead of relying upon solitary and detached passages, take a comprehensive view of the *whole of inspired testimony* bearing upon the topic under consideration. Above all is this necessary in the awfully momentous enquiry which now engages our attention.

In searching the Scriptures do nothing by partiality.

Just to present our readers with an illustration of our meaning and to shew how one class of passages bears upon and modifies another, we will confront the above texts by others which Humanitarians are well pleased to keep in the back ground. Probably the first impression suggested may be that of clashing and even of *contradiction* between the texts compared; but rest assured, good reader, all is harmony, beautiful harmony, to those who discern the key-note of the chord.

Confront those texts by others.

It is true we are told that as a child, "Jesus increased

Jesus was full of wisdom yet grew in wisdom.

in wisdom;" but, look at the context, and you will see that, before that statement is made, it is testified that "He (as a child) was *filled* with wisdom." Luke II. 40. Strange as it seems, there must then have been a sense in which He was *full of wisdom* whilst there was another sense in which He *grew in wisdom.*

His knowledge was in one seuse limited, in another sense universal.

It is true that Jesus said that, He the Son, together with men and angels "knew not of that day and that hour," but it is equally true that Jesus elsewhere declares, "I am He that searcheth the reins and heart." Rev. II. 23. We see moreover that His disciples more than once, with his evident approval, attributed to Him *omniscience.* Peter said, "Lord, thou *knowest all things,*" John XX. 17; whilst on another occasion the whole body of the disciples addressing Him said, "Now are we sure that thou *knowest all things.*" John XVI. 30. Since the Saviour did not repudiate this ascription, we must infer His acquiescence in it; and thus it is made out that there was a sense in which His knowledge was *limited,* and another sense in which it was *universal.*

It is true that Jesus says, "The word which ye hear is *not mine,* but the Father's which sent me" and in so saying He appears simply to claim the powers of a delegate—a divine messenger who, like the prophets of old, only uttered what God put in their mouths, and never pointed to any word of their own. But we have not far to look in order to see that such a deduction is entirely rebutted by other utterances of

Jesus in which He indicates the boundless authority and solemn majesty of *His own word.* "Heaven and earth," says He, "shall pass away, but *my word* shall not pass away," Matt. XXVI. 35. "If a man keep *my word* he shall never see death" John VIII. 51. "If ye continue in *my word,* then are ye my disciples indeed . . . *my word* hath no place in you . . . Ye cannot hear *my word.*" John VIII. 31, 37,43. "Thou hast kept *my word* and not denied my name." Rev. III. 8. Verily, neither angel, prophet or apostle ever spake like this! And it is abundantly clear that, if there was one sense in which He spake God's words as God's messenger, there was another in which He spake as God Himself.

At times He spake as God's messenger, at other times as God himself.

It is true that he said, "I can do nothing of myself" and thereby implied that His power was limited; but what shall we say when we find that same wondrous Being declaring elsewhere, "I am the Almighty?" Rev. I 8. What shall we say when we find that He claims the ability and right to raise the dead, (John V. 28,29) to bestow eternal life, (John X. 29) to judge all mankind? (Matt. XXV. 31) What shall we say when we find Him encouraging His disciples to pray to Him with the assurance, "If ye shall ask anything in my name *I will do it*?" John XIV. 14. Finally, what shall we say when we find it testified that, "All things were made by Him, and that without Him nothing was made which was made?" John *1-13.* Surely the only conclusion we can arrive at is, that if

In one sense His power was limited, in another it was infinite.

there was one sense in which His power was *limited* there was another in which it was *infinite*,*

It is true that Jesus said, "I seek not my own glory, and honor not myself." But with this utterance you have to reconcile the fact that He elsewhere makes an

* There can be little doubt that many of the utterances of Jesus which seem to bear a *self-depreciatory* aspect lose that character altogether when read in their proper light. When we bear in mind that the Jews were ever taxing the Saviour with having "come in His own name," with being a self-appointed teacher and worker; when we remember that they grounded their rejection of His claims on the assumption that He held no heavenly commission, but was speaking His own words and doing His own works—we can at once discern that many of the sayings of Jesus were really framed with reference to those particular objections, and consequently bore upon the one point in dispute; He assured them that He had the authority which they denied, that He neither spake nor did anything apart from that authority; His Father was really with Him in all that He did and said, so that His words and works were not His alone, they were, notwithstanding all that His enemies said to the contrary, the works and words of His Father. "When," said Jesus, "ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that *I am He*, and that I do nothing of myself." (John VIII. 28) and again, "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me He doeth the works." John XIV. 10. One noteworthy saying of Jesus in reference to the Holy Spirit's work in relation to Himself helps us rightly to read His account of His own work in relation to the Father. Does He represent Himself as speaking the words not of Himself, but of the Father? He says the very same of the divine Spirit in connection with himself, "When He, the Spirit of truth: is come, He will guide you into all truth, for *He shall not speak of Himself*, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak . . . He shall *receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you*." John XVI. 13.

imperative claim upon all men to "*Honor the Son even as they honor the Father;*" (John V. 23.) whilst we hear Him again and again speaking of *His own glory* as a topic on which He loved to dwell. To His Father He speaks of "the glory which He had with Him before the world was" and asks that His disciples may "see His glory," (John XVII. 5,24) to *man* He pictures the solemn scene when He shall "come in His glory . . . and sit upon the throne of His glory," Matt. XIX. 38, XXV. 31.) He declares moreover, speaking of the Holy Spirit of God, "He shall *glorify me* for He shall receive of mine and shall shew it unto you." John XVI. 14. We are again confronted with a seeming paradox and can only account for it by concluding that there was a sense in which He did *not* seek His own glory and another sense in which He *did*.

There was a sense in which He did 'not' seek His own glory, and another sense in which He 'did'.

It is perfectly true that Jesus sought grace and strength from His Father by the exercise of prayer, and in this we admit He acted as every good *man* must act; but anon we find Him instructing His disciples to *approach himself in prayer* and to seek grace and help from Him, assuring them that, "whatsoever ye shall ask that will I do," (John XIV. 13. 14.) in this He did what no good man ever has done or could do.

What now shall we make of all this? Here we have two distinct classes of texts—not only distinct, but *apparently* self-contradictory and mutually destructive; and yet they were both spoken by the same sacred mouth; the authority and genuineness of the one rest upon the

What shall we make of all this?

very same evidence as supports the other. What shall we make of them? Shall we say that Christ actually stultified and contradicted Himself to the extent which He *appeared* to do? Nay; it would be a singular instance of the credulity of unbelief to suppose that a person of even ordinary intelligence and judgment—qualities which at least it will be admitted Jesus possessed—could possibly commit Himself to such an eggregious extent. Shall we then adopt the Humanitarian principle and, grasping the one class of texts, shut our eyes to the other? —God forbid! This would be dealing deceitfully with the Word of God and imperilling the soundness of our views and the safety of our souls. Candour and common sense repel the idea that Jesus contradicted Himself. His various utterances then being at harmony with each other, what shall we say if we find the maintenance of our system of doctrine necessitates our thrusting into solitary prominence one class of Christ's utterances, whilst we gladly leave in obscurity the other. Shall we not infer that there is something rotten and unsound in our system? Were our theory heaven-born and true, every utterance of Jesus would be welcome to it, would be needed by it, and would chime in with it in sweet and unbroken concord.

Shall we say He contradicted Himself?

Shall we like Humanitarians take one class of text and leave the other?

Now, we fearlessly maintain that the Humanitarian theory never has done, and never can do justice to the two classes of Christ's sayings adduced above; it must hold to the one and let the other go; not that the advocates

Their theory can never harmonise the two.

of that theory admit this, but practically they go on this principle; and the extraordinary attempts which Commentators of that school have made to force the one class of *incorrigible* texts into seeming concord with their views shew most convincingly the hopelessness of the effort; a deep gulph yawns between the two which no amount of subtlety and ingenuity can bridge over.

If, according to the Humanitarian theory, Jesus had only *one* nature, it follows as a matter of course that, while one class of texts is accounted for, the other finds no *locus standi.* If Jesus were a mere man he might grow in wisdom but he could not at the same time be declared "full of wisdom;" if he were a mere man his knowledge and power would necessarily be limited, and it would be a sheer impossibility to describe him as being at the same time *omniscient* and *omnipotent.* Manifestly these two classes of texts indicate different aspect of the same Holy Being; the testimony of each class is true, strictly true, when viewed in relation to the aspect which it presents, but it is untrue and inappropriate when applied to the opposite aspect. Clearly, therefore, a full and honest and satisfactory solution of those two classes of passages necessitates the recognition of the two-fold aspect of Christ indicated; apart from this, confusion and error and hopeless perplexity must ensue; apart from this a false and imperfect view of the person of Christ must result.

The two classes of texts present two aspects of the Lord Jesus, each of which must be recognised.

Blessed for ever be the God of all grace that He has Himself furnished the key of the whole difficulty! The grand and glorious truth which the holy Book

The doctrine of the two-fold nature of Christ meets and covers the whole of the case.

reveals, that two whole and perfect natures, the Godhead and the manhood, dwelt in the Lord Jesus Christ, at once meets and covers the whole of the case, at once turns seeming discord into harmony; with this heaven-taught doctrine in its hand the Church of the living God has ever grasped and gloried in the *whole testimony* of Scripture regarding its exalted Head. There is not a text which it would dismiss, not a passage which it would modify; it thankfully embraces *all*, and sees therein a true representation of Him Whom it loves and in Whom it trusts.

View Jesus as perfect man, one with ourselves in every respect, (sin only excepted) mentally and physically constituted in every point like ourselves, and subject to the same laws and conditions as govern and influence us, and we at once see that all that is predicated of a mere man might in that respect be predicated of Him; His mental powers in childhood developed and his knowledge increased as is the case with the sons of men; as man His knowledge and His power were limited; as man He bent the knee in prayer, as man He had a finite human will.

What is predicated of man might be predicated of Him.

View Him on the other hand as *perfect God*, endued with all the attributes of deity, and you at once discern that, with equal propriety, all that is predicated of God might be predicated of Him. As God He was full of wisdom, grace and truth; as God He read the secrets of men's hearts and knew all things; as God all power

And what is predicated of God might also be said of Him.

in heaven and earth were His; as God His will was ever one with His Father's; as God He demanded the highest homage of man and proclaimed Himself the Author and Giver of eternal life and the future Judge of men and angels.

The two natures were 'joined not commingled.'

Truly, it was a marvellous union which existed between the two natures in that one Person Christ Jesus—marvellous beyond description, beyond conception; for it was a *union*, and *not* a *fusion;* "as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man so God and man is one Christ."

Do you object, good reader, that you cannot comprehend such a union? Let us ask you whether you can comprehend the kind of union which exists between your gross material body and your thinking, sentient, immaterial spirit; you know you cannot; *this* mystery is as great to you as *that.*

But perhaps you say, "It is inconceivable that Christ, in speaking of Himself as one Person, should in this promiscuous way, now indicate one nature now the other." Our answer is—Christ never spoke promiscuously; He ever knew *what* He said and *why* He said it. But, think a moment of the way in which, in the language of common life, we speak of ourselves; a man says "I walk, I think, I move, I love," without stopping to explain that he says this of his body and that of his mind, and yet these expressions denote two sets of acts, each of which is only true of one side of his compound nature. Nay, even when the terms we employ involve opposites in respect of

How do men speak of themselves and their complex nature?

one or the other part of our nature, we still, without hesitation, use them; thus with equal propriety we describe ourselves as being *mortal* and *immortal*, *corporeal* and *spiritual*, expressions which are the opposites of each other; viewed abstractedly these terms imply contradiction, but viewed in relation to man's complex nature we at once see that their use is true and appropriate.

View then Christ with His two-fold nature so mysteriously united that He knew Himself to be but *one Person*, and yet ever carried about with Him the consciousness of His *double nature;* and then, so far from thinking it strange that He should now speak of one nature and now of the other, we shall feel that this is most natural and reasonable and the very thing we should have expected Him to do. Though this great Catholic verity utterly transcends our comprehension, it does no violence to our understanding or modes of expression; it rests for its proof upon the whole drift of Scripture testmony and, when once embraced with a loving and thankful heart, it casts a flood of light upon the sacred page, and breathes untold hope and joy into the weary soul.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SUM OF THE WHOLE MATTER.

Our task is drawing to a close; may God in His mercy grant us and our readers a *desired ending!* What then shall be the sum of the whole matter? Truths solemn, awful, and eternally momentous have passed before us; what impression will they leave behind them? Some result must follow; it may be *good* it may be *evil;* it cannot be neither. We can only revert to the query with which we began and ask in the words of the Son of man Himself, "What think ye of Christ?" O Reader, tremendous issues depend upon the answer which you give to this question; eternal life or eternal death hangs quivering in the balance. If with humble thankfulness you can cry, "My Lord and my God!"—we bless God and rejoice with you; but should the response of your soul be, "No, I have not advanced, I am not convinced, I think of Christ as a prophet, as a sage, as one of the fairest of the sons of men, but nothing more"—then we sorrow over you and still cry, O Lord, open his eyes that he many see, before the light that is in him becomes total darkness!

An appeal to the Reader.

It is just possible that some one may say, "Really, I don't know what to think and believe of Christ; at times I feel half constrained to bow before him as Divine; then again old impressions prevail and I think as before." To such an one we would say, Friend, search thine own heart, examine thy secret motives, thoughts, feelings. If you look very deep you may, peradventure, discover a lurking prejudice against the doctrine we have put before you; probably all the while that you are trying to persuade yourself and others that you are an *unbiassed* searcher after truth, there is deep down in your soul a *decided wish that this doctrine may not prove to be true*, or that you may not be compelled to believe it; you can discern that the *ability to disbelieve* it is much more grateful to your tastes, and is what you really desire. If something tells you that this is a true picture of your case, then we can only warn you, as we do with all solemnity and earnestness, that your condition is one of extreme peril; we implore you to befool yourselves thus no longer, lest that retribution befal you which the poet's words so awfully depict.

Beware of self-delusion.

> "Hear the just law, the judgment of the skies,
> He that hates truth shall be the dupe of lies,
> He that will be cheated, to the last
> Delusions strong as hell shall bind him fast."

It is far from our desire and aim that, our readers should close this treatise with a feeling that, after all, it is a balance of probabilities as to which view is the right one. We cannot conceive how such an impres-

sion should remain in the mind of any candid and earnest reader; still it is possible that such may be the case; at any rate it strikes us as desirable in this our closing chapter to pass in rapid review the course of argument we have pursued, and briefly recapitulate its salient points. In this way a birds-eye-view of the whole subject will be obtained, and, perhaps, the nail of conviction may be fastened in the right place.

A recapitulation.

The first chapter dealt with the tremendous importance of the discussion; it was shewn that on either hand terrible issues were dependent; that if Christ were *not* really God then all the millions of Christians who worship Him as Divine were guilty of gross idolatry; whilst, on the other hand, if He *were* really and truly God, then what daring impiety were those guilty of who robbed Him of His divine character and degraded the Creator to the level of a creature. In order to dissipate loose notions as to the leniency with which God may treat mistakes of the judgment in such a matter, it was shown that, in the natural Government of God we find no trace whatever of this supposed leniency, that the transgression of natural laws is followed by natural penalties whether the transgression be the result of ignorance or design, from which it was argued that, God's *moral* government being analogous to His *natural*, there was every ground for fear and none at all for hope in connection with a mistaken view respecting the person and character of Christ.

The tremendous importance of the discussion.

Chapter II asked what the *world* had thought about

Christ; it shewed that the world* had thought and reasoned and speculated very largely concerning *that* wonderful Being; several of the conflicting theories which had been propounded respecting Him were described; it was shewn that the multifarious and ever-changing character of those theories sufficiently testified to their inadequacy in pourtraying the features of the holy Jesus; that in fact, the discovery of the failure of each theory fully and truly to represent those features had led to its supercession by another, which had again in its turn been abandoned for the same reason; all of which seemed very clearly to imply that there was somewhat in the character of Christ which refused to be compressed within any Humanitarian theory whatever.

What the world thought about Christ.

Our next step was to enquire what the *early Church* had thought about Christ; bearing in mind the strangely daring assertion that the "Church knew nothing of Christ's divinity before the Council of Nice" we examined into the records of the Ante-Nicene Church; beginning with the Council of Nice we *traced the faith of those* primitive believers *up to the very era of the Apostle.* We trust our readers have not forgotten the array of testimony adduced in refutation of the above groundless boast. First of all, we saw that Celsus, Lucian, Porphyry and others, who in their writings bitterly assailed the Pri-

What the early Church thought about Christ?

* *i. e.*, the *unorthodox* world, those who were not recognised members of the Church Catholic.

mitive Church, did so mainly on this one ground that, "Christians worshipped as God a crucified malefactor." This was the one charge which unbelievers of every class cast in the teeth of Christians with unmitigated scorn. And what reply did we find the Christian Apologists give to this spiteful taunt? Did they correct the mistake of their assailants and repudiate the charge? Nay verily, we find them with one voice pleading guilty to the accusation and glorying in the fact that they bowed in adoration at the feet of Him Who died on Calvary, and recognized in Him the Creator of all things and the Saviour of the world. We saw, moreover, that numbers of those saints of old had rejoicingly endured imprisonment, torture, and death itself rather than deny their faith in the God-man Christ Jesus; we listened to their dying ascriptions of praise and devotion, and saw most clearly that a Crucified and a Risen God was the grand Centre of their hopes and joys. The morning and evening devotions of the early Christians testified to the same truth, that they ever worshipped the Saviour as divine. A series of devout utterances from the writings of the Fathers, the testimony of Ignatius and Polycarp, both of whom had sat at the feet of St. John, closed the evidence; we found those venerable men all speaking of Jesus as the very and eternal God. Thus two things were plainly made out; *first*, that the doctrine contained in the Nicene Creed was simply an expression of the faith which had all along been in Church; and *secondly*, that this faith had *not* passed through any varying phases of development as Humanitarians

suggest, but meets us on the very threshold of the Apostolic era in its fullest maturity.

Having traced the doctrine up to the Apostolic Fathers, we next enquired what was the teaching of the Apostles themselves as to the Person and character of their Lord. We saw that those holy men writing (as all true Christians believe) under the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit, do most undoubtedly ascribe to Christ both the titles and the attributes of the true and living God. They speak of Him as "Our God and Saviour," as "God blessed for ever," as "The true God and eternal life," as "Lord over all." They describe Him as the Creator and Upholder of *all things*, as the Lord of life and glory, as the future Judge of men and angels, and declare that unto Him every knee shall bow of things in heaven and earth and under the earth. Renouncing every other trust they commit the eternal safety of their immortal souls to His Almighty hands. We thus saw that, if words had any meaning, it must be conceded that the Apostles did most fully and heartily believe and teach the great truth of the actual divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ; and then, considering that they were the bosom friends and the constant companions of Jesus during the whole of His public ministry, it was natural to infer that, what they taught and believed was really that which their honored Master had taught them. The idea that they were either *deceived* or *deceivers* in this matter was shewn to be utterly untenable; what could have led them with one accord to take Jesus to be God if He

What the Apostles thought of Christ.

had not revealed Himself as such? and if they did not believe Him to be God what motive had they for teaching others that He was so, seeing the only recompense of such false teaching was persecution, ignominy, reproach, and death?

The next point to which our enquiry naturally conducted us was the *testimony of Christ to Himself.* Marvellous is that testimony truly! Would God that it were engraven as with the pen of a diamond on the heart of every reader! First of all, we saw Jesus pointing to His miraculous deeds as testifying to His exalted Being and position. We then noted certain phenomena (so to speak) in the character of Jesus which were totally incompatible with the Humanitarian theory. It was observed that, humility, modesty, a conciousness of weakness and fallibility and, above all, *deep repentance* for actual errors and shortcomings are traits which must inevitably characterise all truly good men. Humanitarians say Jesus Christ was a truly good man and nothing more. But Jesus never breathed a contrite word, never admitted a mistake or failure, never acknowledged any weakness or liability to err; on the contrary He claimed to be absolutely sinless; and proclaimed His utterances to be eternally true and everlastingly abiding, eternal life or death depending on their reception or rejection; "Heaven and earth," said He, "shall pass away but my words shall not pass away." Anon we beheld His singular *self-asertion;* we heard Him on the mountain top, in tones not less authoritative than those which had proclaimed the Law

The testimony of Christ to Himself.

on Sinai, point to this and that divine enactment and pronounce over it the decree of abrogation, "Ye have heard that it hath been said &c. . . but I say unto you &c." Thus did He assume the right and power to annul Divine statutes, substituting for them others of His own making, and all this without the slightest intimation of any delegated authority. He speaks not in the prophetic strain as,—"Thus saith the Lord," but in tones of awful and Godlike majesty, "*I* say unto you."

Again we heard His imperious, all-embracing demands upon man's devotion and self-surrender; His claim that all men should accord to Him the same honor that they render to the Father; His declaration that men must come to Him for eternal life, and that coming to Him involved the surrender of body, soul, and spirit to His service, insomuch that, whosoever came to Him and hated not father, mother, wife, children, yea, and his own self also, he could not be His disciple, clearly implying that Christ is to be the Object of the soul's supreme devotion, and that all inferior love must yield to its absorbing power. We heard Him teach His faithful followers to lay their wants before Him in prayer with the assurance that *He will hear and answer*. We heard from His own mouth the account of his *pre-existence*, of His *Omniscience* and *Omnipresence;* we listened as He told of His mysterious oneness with the Father, oneness in essence and Being, oneness in attributes and operative energy, "I and my Father are one," "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," "My Father worketh hitherto and I work."

"All things that the Father hath are mine; all mine are thine and thine are mine." "The Father is in me and I in Him." We saw that the Humanitarian idea that, in these and similar passages nothing more was involved than such spiritual communion as all righteous souls have with God the Father, was lame and futile to the last degree, especially when it is remembered that Jesus promised to such righteous souls, His and the Father's joint-habitation within them for the perfecting of their spiritual life. "If a man love me my Father will love him and *we* will come unto him and take up *our* abode with him." Gaze well, good reader, on these words, "We" and "Our" and then say, with what honesty and conscience you can account for them on any other than orthodox grounds; nor would we have you forget the telling fact that, when again and again accused of making Himself God "and making Himself equal with God," when threatened with stoning, and, at last, when confronted with the terrible Cross itself as the penalty of maintaining His lofty claims, He never for a moment hesitated or wavered much less retracted. He confirmed and reiterated those claims. His judges said He had blasphemed, and rent their clothes in horror because before their tribunal He proclaimed Himself "the Son of the living God." "He is guilty of death," said they; did He try to bar the sentence by disavowing the charge? Nay, He aboundantly endorsed the accusation; looking His judges calmly in the face He said, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of Power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

He had before that spoken again and again of His awful majesty as the Judge of all men; He had depicted the scene when He would come in His glory with all the holy angels in his suite; when they who are in the graves would hear His voice and live; when all nations would be gathered before His great white throne whilst His own solemn sentence, "Come ye blessed" or "Depart ye cursed," would eternally seal the doom of every child of man. Again we repeat what we have said before, who does not stand aghast at the thought of a man, of an angel, yea, of the highest archangel, uttering words like these? We entreat you, good reader, sit down before this picture of Christ's testimony to Himself, and see what you can make of it; if, as a mere man, He laid claim to such stupendous powers and dignities, proclaimed Himself the object of universal homage, demanded from all men entire consecration to Himself— a demand which none but the Creator could rightly make—and represented the eternal destinies of all men as resting in his hand—which destinies can lie in no other hand but God's—if we consider Jesus, *as a man*, saying and claiming all this, what only conclusion can we draw respecting Him? There is only one alternative;—Either He was a madman or a most daring and impious impostor. But, in the light of those marvellous words of wisdom which fell from His lips, who dare call Him a madman? And in the light of that holy spotless life, that meek and loving, truthful and sincere demeanour which characterised the Son of man, who dare whisper that He was an impostor and profane? In truth, the world

seems to have settled the point of Christ's character. He is admitted to have been all that is excellent and true and good—Yet—O strange paradox ! many who thus commend Christ, cannot believe Him—cannot permit the utterances of His mouth to bear their true and natural meaning. Verily we seem again to hear the solemn lament which Jesus uttered over the unbelievers of that day, "If I say the truth why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not because ye are not of God."

The VI Chapter gave us a view of the combined testimony of the Old and New Testaments to Christ. We thus heard the echo and re-echo of inspired utterances indicating the Son of man. We beheld Jesus appearing to the Patriarchs of old in various forms but ever as divine; we heard the testimony of the Father in the Old and new Testaments to His "beloved Son." By the light of the New Testament thrown back upon passages of the Old we perceived that the glory, honor and majesty of the Father and the Son were essentially one, that in the pages of the Old Testament, the Son is not only endued with the attributes of deity, but bears in many places even the awful and incommunicable title of *Jehovah*. Thus was it seen that, from Genesis to Revelation, the testimony of the inspired Book establishes the great verity for which we were pleading.

In the next Chapter we dealt with some of the leading objections put forth by those of the Humanitarian chool. As that discussion has so recently occupied s, there is hardly a necessity here to recal what was

so lately said; the only remark we have to offer is, the very singular fact that, the very passages to which our opponents attach the most weight as telling for their cause, do, when sifted and examined, generally turn out as indirectly supporting the orthodox view.

We have done. Let us close, as we began, *with prayer;*—O God most mighty, O God most holy, Thou willest not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and be saved; have mercy upon those who have not the knowledge of thy truth; Save them, O most merciful God, from the deceits of the world, the flesh and the devil; bring them to such a sense of sin and helplessness that the cry of their souls may be, what must we do to be saved? Then lead them O Holy Father, by thy blessed Spirit to see in Jesus Christ the incarnate God, and in His death and sufferings the price of their redemption. Hear O Lord, and answer this prayer for thy dear Son's sake.

Finally, we invite such of our readers as are one with us in the common faith to join us while we sum up the whole matter, in the words of that matchless hymn, which, dating from the second century, shews us not only what the early Christians *believed*, but how they *worshipped*. May our faith and devotion be as true and fervent as theirs!

"Glory be to God on high, and in earth peace, good will towards men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the Only-begotten Son Jesus Christ; O

Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord; thou only O Christ with the Holy Ghost art most High in the glory of God the Father."* Amen.

* Gloria in excelsis.

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